OUTLINE *of* JEWISH KNOWLEDGE

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Outline of Jewish knowledge

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OUTLINE OF JEWISH KNOWLEDGE

being

A HISTORY OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE

and

AN ANTHOLOGY OF JEWISH LITERATURE

From the Earliest Times to the Present: including a Brief Account of the History and Civilization of the Nations with Whom the Jews Have Come into Contact, and an Exposition of the Present-day Status and Problems of the Jewries of the World

IN TWELVE VOLUMES

With Maps and Illustrations

by

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and

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Director of the Bureau of Jewish Education

VOLUME ONE

FOUNDING OF THE NATION

From the Earliest Times to the Death of Saul

STUDENT'S EDITION

With Course of Study

BUREAU OF JEWISH EDUCATION

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Dedicated
to the memory of

Louis Marshall

the peerless leader
to whom the Jewish education
of the American Jewish youth
was of paramount importance
and to whose encouragement and support
this work
is greatly indebted

GENERAL FOREWORD

JEWS of a new generation, in America and other lands, are groping for inner harmony and self-adjustment to their people and their racial heritage. What attitude shall they take toward the Jewish people and its problems? What claims has this people upon them? What is this Jewishness which keeps clinging to them? Why should they and their children continue to be Jews?

Unfortunately, many a modern Jew is called upon to answer those questions without possessing even a minimum of the necessary knowledge — Jewish knowledge. The processes of Jewish education, such as they are in America, for example, have passed them by. And yet, in the bewildering play of forces in which they live, in their groping for light, the most important guide must be the lamp of knowledge.

But Jewish knowledge is a broad and deep ocean. It is an accumulation of several millenia of a rich spiritual and intellectual life. It ramifies into numerous channels, it is stored in many languages, chiefly, of course, in the Hebrew language. For the great majority of modern Jews this knowledge has been well-nigh inapproachable. To overcome the many obstacles that stand in the way of its acquisition, the first necessity is to digest and organize it.

The present work is an attempt to organize Jewish knowledge and present it concisely and graphically.

Its method of organization is not encyclopedic but narrative. Its first basic constituent is a history of the Jewish people from the earliest times to the present. This history is designed to show a people in motion and evolution, a people fashioning its environment and being fashioned by it, creating new conceptions and new ways of life to meet new conditions, fructifying and uplifting the spirit of mankind, suffering and struggling but

never succumbing. In conjunction with this history of the Jews, the history and civilization of those nations with whom the Jews came into contact is briefly sketched in, for the Jews have been the most cosmopolitan people on earth, and they cannot be understood without some knowledge of their neighbors. Moreover, some account of the geography of the lands in which the Jews have lived is woven into this general picture of the civilization of Babylonians, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Spaniards, Poles, etc. Finally, one of the volumes of this "Outline" is devoted to an exposition of the status and problems of the various Jewries throughout the world.

The second basic constituent of this work consists of an anthology of the literature produced by the Jewish people throughout their career. Literature is perhaps the best available mirror of a people's spirit and mode of life, and when it reflects a life that is rich and complex, it takes on forms of beauty. The selections from Jewish literature that have been made for each period are believed to reflect the ideals, beliefs and mode of life of the Jews of that period, and, in addition, possess that intangible quality of beauty and spiritual impulsion which make them valuable in and for themselves. Further, the books from which selections have been made, are described and summarized, so that the reader may obtain some knowledge of the major books that constitute the vast storehouse of Jewish literature.

A brief statement of the contents of each volume of this work will make clearer its general scope.

Volume One deals with the beginnings and earliest struggles of the Jewish people, its period of probation, as it were, until the death of Saul.

Volume Two embraces the period of the First Commonwealth, from David to the Babylonian Exile.

Volume Three takes in the Second Commonwealth, from the restoration of the exiles to the destruction of the Jewish state by Rome.

Volume Four, beginning the story of the long dispersion, deals with the fortunes of the communities of Western Asia, of which that of Babylonia was the most important.

Volume Five is concerned with the brilliant and tragic career of the Jews of Spain, from its start until the fateful year 1492.

Volume Six covers the history of the Jews of the West — France, Germany, England, etc., until the French Revolution.

Volume Seven deals with the Jews of the East — Eastern Europe and Asia — where the community of Poland achieved first rank.

Volume Eight, embracing both East and West, opens the modern period of Jewish history, and centers around the struggle for emancipation.

Volume Nine continues the story until the outbreak of the World War, the principal focus of interest being now the national renaissance.

Volume Ten is devoted to the history and present-day problems of the Jews of America.

Volume Eleven deals with the fortunes of the other leading Jewish communities since the World War and their present-day status.

Volume Twelve is concerned with Palestine, its fortunes, problems and relations with the Jewries of the World.

The authors of this work are aware that it possesses shortcomings that arise from various causes, and not least from the peculiar difficulties that inhere in the task of writing the story of a scattered people. They believe, however, that it will fulfill its primary purpose: to give the modern Jew a fund of knowledge and understanding of his people which will help him to adjust himself, as a Jew, in the world in which he lives.

The authors acknowledge gratefully the assistance they have had from the Advisory Board of Editors consisting of the following men, all of whom have made noteworthy contributions to Jewish education in America: Mr. Israel S. Chipkin, Dr. Alexander Dushkin, Dr. Emanuel Gamoran, Dr. Jacob S. Golub, Dr. Leo Honor, Dr. Mordecai M. Kaplan, Dr. Samuel Margoshes, Dr. Joshua Neumann, Mr. Ben Rosen, and Dr. Mordecai Soltes.

New York, September, 1929.

I. G.
S. B.

PREFACE TO VOLUME ONE

THE Patriarchal period, the exodus from Egypt, the great event at Sinai, the desert wanderings, the conquest and struggles that followed — these constitute the first epic of the Jewish people, and the aim has been, both in the narrative sections and in the literary anthology, to convey something of the spirit and atmosphere of the epic as it has come down to us. At the same time, however, the authors have sought to trace the evolution of the Hebrew clans into a people, giving due weight to the geographic and economic, as well as the spiritual factor, and indicating the influence of the civilizations by which the Hebrews were affected.

In presenting the subject matter of this volume, the authors have elected to follow the traditional account which, however, they have endeavored to illumine by the authenticated findings of the "higher criticism." They have been led to make that choice by the consideration that the traditional account, besides standing essentially firm, has the added merit of being valuable in and for itself. They have felt that in "An Outline of Jewish Knowledge," a knowledge of those traditions is more important than an acquaintance with the often conflicting speculations of the "higher critics."

In the preparation of this volume the authors have had invaluable assistance from Dr. Joshua Neumann, and they are grateful also to the Jewish Publication Society of America for permission to publish selections from its translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. They desire also to acknowledge the services rendered by Messrs. Saul and Joseph Raskin in the preparation of the maps and illustrations.

I. G.
S. B.

CONTENTS OF VOLUME ONE

PAGE

TOPIC ONE: A NATION IS BORN

§ 1. The Patriarch Abraham Leads a Band of Hebrew Shepherds into Canaan 3
§ 2. Canaan Is the Western End of a "Fertile Crescent" Which Swings Around the Arabian Desert to the Persian Gulf 12
§ 3. Babylonia, the Eastern End of the "Fertile Crescent," Was the Seat of an Old and Complex Civilization . . 17
§ 4. Under the Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the Hebrew Nomads in Canaan Grow in Wealth and Numbers 28
§ 5. The Nomad Leads a Peculiar Life of His Own, Hard, Dangerous and Free 35
§ 6. Impelled by Drought and Famine, the Children of Israel Go Down into Egypt 42

TOPIC ONE: LITERATURE

1. The Creation 47
2. The Testing of Abraham 52
3. Eliezer and Rebekah 54
4. Joseph and His Brothers 59

TOPIC TWO: THE BONDAGE OF EGYPT

§ 1. Egypt Is Like a Green Snake Curling through the Yellow Desert 75
§ 2. From Its Tombs and Temples, from Its Art and Writing, We Glean the Story of the Gorgeous Civilization of Ancient Egypt 78
§ 3. A New Pharaoh, in the Age of the Empire, Makes Slaves of the Hebrews Sojourning in Egypt 96
§ 4. A Great Leader, Moses the Liberator, Rises Up and Leads Them Forth from the "House of Bondage" 101

PAGE

TOPIC TWO: LITERATURE

1. The Birth and Early Manhood of Moses 107
2. The Burning Bush 110
3. The Song of Deliverance 112

TOPIC THREE: SINAI AND THE DESERT

§ 1. Instead of Taking the Direct Route North, Moses Leads His People to Mt. Sinai in the Desert 117
§ 2. At Sinai the People Accept the Ten Commandments, the Foundation of Their Religion and Ethics 123
§ 3. Moses Proceeds to Teach Them the Torah or the Laws to Govern Their Religious and Social Life 129
§ 4. The Journey Is Resumed, and, after Many and Long Trials, the Hebrews Conquer the Lands East of the Jordan Where Moses Is "Gathered to His Fathers" . 143

TOPIC THREE: LITERATURE

1. The Revelation at Mount Sinai 151
2. The Sin of the Golden Calf 154
3. The Sabbatical and Jubilee Years 157
4. Story of the Twelve Spies 160
5. Story of Balaam the Magician 163
6. The Farewell of Moses 171
7. The Death of Moses 176

TOPIC FOUR: CANAAN AND ITS CONQUEST

§ 1. Led by Joshua, the Hebrews Begin the Conquest of Canaan with the Capture of the Fortresses of Jericho and Ai 181
§ 2. Canaan Is a Fertile Land with Immense Variations in Topography and Climate. It Is the Natural Highway Between Asia and Africa 185
§ 3. The Inhabitants of Canaan, the Amorites and Canaanites, Borrowed their Civilization from the Babylonians and Egyptians 195
§ 4. After Conquering the Land More or Less Completely, Joshua Divides It among the Tribes of the Children of Israel 205

TOPIC FOUR: LITERATURE

1. The Appointment of Joshua 212
2. The Story of the Two Spies 214

PAGE
3. The Story of the Wily Gibeonites 217
4. The Defeat of the Amorites 219
5. Renewal of the Covenant by Joshua 221

Topic Five: The Critical Century

§ 1. The Disunited Israelite Tribes Are Exposed to Attack from Strong Enemies and to the Lure of Idolatry . . 229
§ 2. The Israelites Are Delivered from Different Oppressors by the Judges among Whom Deborah, Gideon and Jephthah Are the Most Important 238
§ 3. The Philistines, after Being Checked for a Time by the Hero Samson, Defeat the Israelites and Force Them to Pay Tribute 247

Topic Five: Literature

1. Deborah's Song of Triumph 255
2. The Stratagem and Victory of Gideon 260
3. Jotham's Fable 263
4. The Betrayal and Death of Samson 265
5. The Story of Ruth 268

Topic Six: Samuel, King Saul and David

§ 1. Samuel, a Prophet and the Greatest of the Judges, Is Compelled in His Old Age to Find a King for Israel 279
§ 2. Saul of Benjamin Is Chosen Israel's First King. He Overcomes the Ammonites and Inflicts a Defeat on the Philistines 287
§ 3. Samuel Renounces Saul for Disobedience, and the King Becomes Gloomy and Dejected 293
§ 4. David, the Young Harpist and Hero from Judah, at First Soothes Saul, but the King Becomes Morbidly Jealous of Him and Seeks to Slay Him 296
§ 5. After Hunting David for Many Years, Saul Fights His Last Battle with the Philistines. He Is Defeated and Takes His Own Life 305

Topic Six: Literature

1. The Birth of Samuel 308
2. The Capture of the Ark and Death of Eli 311
3. The Anointment of Saul 314

PAGE
4. The Story of David and Goliath 317
5. The Friendship of David and Jonathan 322
6. The Fugitive Spares His Pursuer 328
7. Saul's Last Battle 330

COURSE OF STUDY

TOPIC ONE: A NATION IS BORN
A. Summary 337
B. Questions 340
C. Subjects for Essays 343
D. Suggestions for Additional Reading 344

TOPIC TWO: THE BONDAGE OF EGYPT
A. Summary 346
B. Questions 348
C. Subjects for Essays 350
D. Suggestions for Additional Reading 351

TOPIC THREE: SINAI AND THE DESERT
A. Summary 352
B. Questions 354
C. Subjects for Essays 357
D. Suggestions for Additional Reading 358

TOPIC FOUR: CANAAN AND ITS CONQUEST
A. Summary 359
B. Questions 361
C. Subjects for Essays 364
D. Suggestions for Additional Reading 365

TOPIC FIVE: THE CRITICAL CENTURY
A. Summary 366
B. Questions 369
C. Subjects for Essays 372
D. Suggestions for Additional Reading 372

TOPIC SIX: SAMUEL, KING SAUL AND DAVID
A. Summary 373
B. Questions 376
C. Subjects for Essays 380
D. Suggestions for Additional Reading 381

CHRONOLOGIC CHART 382
INDEX xix

LIST OF MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

MAPS

	PAGE
Canaan and the World Around Her	4
The Lands of the "Fertile Crescent"	12
Canaan and Her Immediate Neighbors	29
Egypt and Her Immediate Neighbors	76
The Journey from Egypt	120
Canaan in the Period of the Conquest	182
Relief Map of Palestine	186
Canaan as Divided Among the Twelve Tribes	208
Israel in the Time of the Judges	232
The Land of Israel in the Time of Saul	290

ILLUSTRATIONS

The Site of Ancient Ur, the Birthplace of Abraham	6
An Ancient Egyptian Country House	8
Unearthing an Ancient City	10
The Plain of Shinar	14
The Land of the Garden of Eden	15
A Phalanx of Sumerian Spearmen	17
A Babylonian Tower Temple	18
Impression from a Babylonian Cylinder Seal	19
From Picture to Cuneiform	20
An Ancient Sumerian Street Unearthed	21
A Babylonian Weight	22
Portrait of an Ancient Sumerian	23
Hammurabi Receiving His Laws from the Sun God	24
A Passage from the Code of Hammurabi	25
Hittite Soldiers	27
Modern Hebron	32
A Nomad Encampment	36
The Nomad at Home	38
A Sacred Pillar	40

PAGE

The Tomb of Rachel 42
Storing up Grain in Ancient Egypt 44
In the Land of Goshen 46
The God Marduk Battling with the Monster Tiamat 49
The Colossal Pyramid of Khufu 80
Cross Section of the Pyramid of Khufu 81
The Word "Israel" in Hieroglyphics 82
Ancient Egyptian Farmers at Work 83
Hathor 84
Sekhmet, Goddess of War 85
The Temple of Luxor 87
From the Story of Sinuhi 88
Merchants from Canaan Trading in Egypt 89
An Ancient Egyptian Charioteer 90
Amon-Re, God of the Sun 92
A "Page" from One of the El-Amarna Letters 93
Rameses II as a Young Man 94
Mummy of Rameses II 97
Slaves of Ancient Egypt Making Bricks 98
The Story of Merneptah's Victories 100
Merneptah 104
Where the Israelites Toiled as Slaves 105
Philistine Prisoners of War 118
Mount Sinai and the Plain of Assemblage 124
The Craggy Summit of Mount Sinai 130
The Egyptian Goddess Hathor 131
The Tabernacle, or Portable Temple 133
The Ark of the Covenant 134
The High Priest in His Vestments 136
The Wilderness of Sinai 138
An Oasis in the Sinai Desert 140
The Oasis of Kadesh-Barnea 144
The Entrance to Petra 146
Amorites 147
Mount Nebo 148
Ruins of the Walls of Ancient Jericho 184
The Jordan River 187
The Drop of the Jordan River 188
A View of the Coastal Plain of Palestine 189
The Promontory of Mount Carmel 190

PAGE
The Plain of Jezreel 192
A View of the Hill Country near Jerusalem 194
Canaanite Captives Led by Egyptians 197
Egyptians Storming a Canaanite Fortress 198
A Phoenician Merchant Ship 199
A Modern Arab Village in Palestine 200
Ramman, God of Thunder 201
The Goddess Astarte 202
Furnishings of a Canaanite "High Place" 203
The Snowy Summit of Mount Hermon 210
A Canaanite Altar 230
The Hill Country of Samaria 234
Ruins of the Site of Ancient Shiloh 236
Mount Tabor in the Valley of Jezreel 238
An Encampment of the "Children of the East" 240
A Ford of the Jordan 246
Philistines and Egyptians in Battle 248
Palm Groves Near Modern Gaza 250
The Philistine God Dagon 251
Supposed Site of Ramah, Birthplace of Samuel 280
Supposed Site of Mizpah 282
The Pass at Michmash 292
A View of Modern Beth-lehem 297
A Shepherd's Sling, Reed Pipes and Water Bottle 298
Caves at Adullam 302
Site of En-gedi 304
The Site of Ancient Beth-shan 306

TOPIC ONE
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§ 6. *Impelled by Drought and Famine, the Children of Israel Go Down into Egypt.*

TOPIC ONE: LITERATURE

1. The Creation (*Genesis* 1–2 [3]).
2. The Testing of Abraham (*Genesis* 22 [1-19]).
3. Eliezer and Rebekah (*Genesis* 24).
4. Joseph and His Brothers (*Genesis* 37 [3-36]; 42–45).

OUTLINE OF JEWISH KNOWLEDGE

TOPIC ONE

A Nation Is Born

§ 1. *The Patriarch Abraham Leads a Band of Hebrew Shepherds into Canaan.*

IT ALL began with a band of roving shepherds who, having crossed the River Euphrates from Haran in northwestern Mesopotamia, drove their flocks southward through Syria into the land of Canaan. They were led by a man called Abram whose name, in token of the future greatness and multitude of his descendants, was later changed to Abraham.

In the story of Abraham's journey to Canaan, as told by the inspired historian of the Bible, we read that it was no ordinary cause that led him to depart from Haran. It was God Himself who ordered the journey. "Get thee out of thy country," said the Lord to Abraham, "and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee." And Abraham is informed that a great nation shall spring from him in which "all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

In the mind of mankind in general and of the Jews

CANAAN AND THE WORLD AROUND HER

in particular, that trek from Haran to Canaan marks the beginning of the Hebrew nation. The very name, Hebrew, is connected with the journey; for, having come from the other side of the Euphrates River, Abraham was called *Ibri,* meaning "he who came across." And the belief arose that between Abraham and his descendants on the one hand, and the land of Canaan, later known as Palestine, on the other, a peculiar and profound connection was established by God, a bond of union by which the Hebrews were to possess that land forever. This bond was set forth in a covenant entered into between God and Abraham and renewed with Isaac, his son, and Jacob, his grandson. "I will give unto thee and to thy seed after thee . . . all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God." And to seal this covenant, the rite and practice of circumcision was enjoined upon Abraham for himself and "every man child among you." The memory of this covenant has had a powerful influence on the imagination and will of the people whose career began with that march from Mesopotamia to Canaan.

The exact date of that journey we have no means of knowing. It occurred probably some four thousand years ago in the Twenty-first or Twentieth Century before the common era. Nor is it to be supposed that the group led by Abraham was the only band of Semitic shepherds who drove their flocks from the edges of the desert onto the fertile slopes and valleys of Canaan. With Abraham and his band the birth of the Hebrew nation is associated, but other nomad clans of the same racial stock must have come before him and still others came after him.

For, from time immemorial, the vast and silent desert

of Arabia has launched its hordes of hungry nomads upon the fields and villages of the neighboring lands. It was the ordinary thing for a tribe of wandering shepherds to divide and for one of the groups to leave "its kindred and its father's house," even as Abraham had done, in search of new pasture and new wells for its flocks of sheep and goats. This, in fact, is still the prac-

From "Wonders of the Past," Courtesy G. P. Putnam's Sons.

THE SITE OF ANCIENT UR, THE BIRTHPLACE OF ABRAHAM

The excavated brick walls in the foreground and the still covered mound in the back are part of the temple of the moon god. The mound is the result of the accumulation of débris on the central tower of the temple. Ur was a city of considerable importance situated just south of the Euphrates River not far from the Persian Gulf, which anciently extended much deeper inland.

tice among the Beduins, or nomad Arabs, of to-day. For the springs sometimes run dry, the grass of the pastures becomes parched or is all nibbled up by the hungry animals, or the people as well as the flocks become too numerous for the district to support all of them. Then the shepherds either fall to fighting over the wells and grass-

lands, or, if they are more sensible, they agree to a separation.

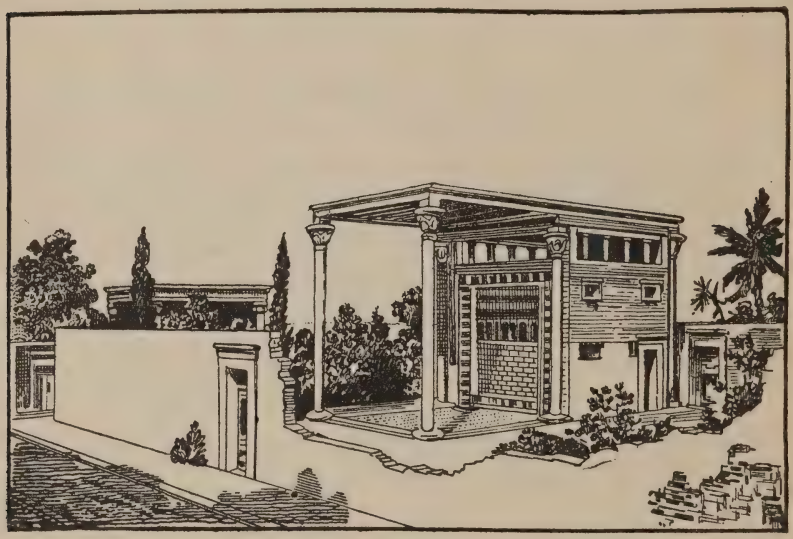
So early on a morning, before the fierce sun has heated the cool air of the night, those that are to go pull up the pegs of their black tents and fold them into bundles which they sling over the backs of their camels together with goatskin bottles filled with water for the journey. And, having assembled their flocks and herds, they go off in a cloud of dust toward new pastures and new adventures.

Abraham himself had wandered many hundreds of miles even before the divine command came to him in Haran to fold his tents and proceed to Canaan. His birthplace was the city of Ur near the Persian Gulf. There, in the household of his father Terah, he had spent his childhood and early manhood. There he had taken to wife a woman named Sarah who, unhappily, had borne him no children.

It was there, also, that Abraham, according to tradition, made a tremendous discovery. In him there first dawned a knowledge of the One and Only God, the Maker of heaven and earth. Whence came to him this knowledge? Out of the depths of his own soul in the loneliness and mystery of the vast desert plains where he shepherded his father's flocks, where the angry heat of the day pursued him, where he was soothed and transported by the grandeur of the starry nights. There, the Spirit of all flesh, the invisible God of the Universe, revealed Himself to Abraham's sensitive soul. It was a discovery of incalculable importance to him and his descendants and to the whole of mankind. Abraham became the first monotheist, the first believer in One God, a belief which he bequeathed to his descendants, the

Jewish people, and which they, in turn, have taught to other nations. Legend presents Abraham, also, as the first iconoclast, for, with the knowledge of the One and true God strong within him, he broke the idols of stone and wood which his father still made and worshiped.

From Ur, we are told, Abraham had gone forth with his father Terah, his wife Sarah and his nephew Lot. It was, no doubt, another nomad march in search of new



From Erman's "Egypt."

AN ANCIENT EGYPTIAN COUNTRY HOUSE

This is a restoration based on actual plans of ancient Egyptian houses. The stone wall of the court has been broken away to permit a view of the building and garden. Compare the splendor of this villa with the nomad encampment on p. 38.

pastures. Even then their destination had been Canaan, but they had stopped in Haran where Terah had died. There Abraham had prospered. When the command came to him to proceed on his journey he took his wife and nephew "and all their substance that they had gathered and the souls that they had gotten in Haran."

When the first Patriarch reached Beer-sheba, the most southern town of Canaan, he had swung around the half circle that tops the Arabian peninsula from the Persian Gulf to the border of Egypt.

Once in Canaan, the Hebrew shepherds under Abraham found themselves between Babylonia lying behind them and Egypt lying before. In both those lands, as well as in Canaan itself, there were nations whose mode of life was radically different from that of the Hebrews. Those nations were not nomads. They lived in cities and villages. They tilled the soil, and engaged in manufacturing and commerce. They erected handsome houses and palaces for themselves, and splendid temples and towers for their gods. They were ruled by monarchs who commanded strong armies and waged far-flung wars. They had developed the art of writing as well as a great many other arts, useful and ornamental. They had, in other words, achieved a high stage of civilization.

In fact, civilization for mankind as a whole began in Babylonia and Egypt. In the fertile valleys of the Euphrates and the Nile, nations were fully launched on the upward climb of humanity toward knowledge and mastery of their surroundings, at a time when, in Europe and elsewhere, men were still sunk in the savagery of the Stone Age. While the Hebrew nation was being born, civilization in those valleys was already old.

As the simple Hebrew shepherds wandered through the half circle from Babylonia into Canaan and, later, into Egypt, they were, no doubt, dazzled by the walled cities which they skirted, and the temples and towers which they spied glittering in the sunlight. They were lured by all that splendor and repelled by it at the same time, for they knew it to be the habitation of corruption

and oppression and shame. But they could not help being influenced by it. They could not help deriving from the other nations many ideas, beliefs and practices, though often enough what they thus derived clashed violently with the teachings of their own leaders. In order, therefore, to understand the culture developed by the Hebrews, it is essential to have some acquaintance with the nations with whom they came into contact.

UNEARTHING AN ANCIENT CITY

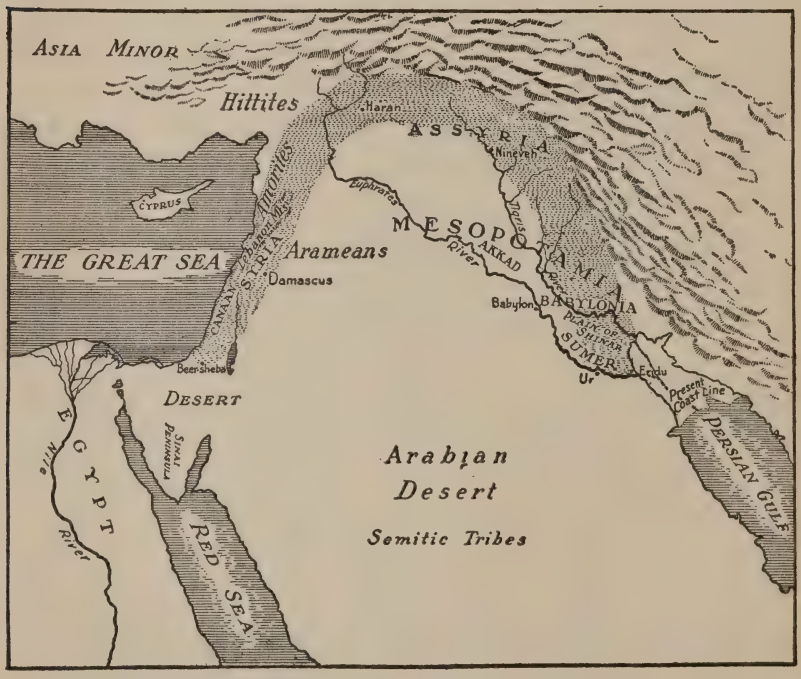
A gang of native laborers in Mesopotamia, in charge of a European director, are digging away at the foundations of the walls of an ancient Babylonian city. Baskets filled with débris are passed from hand to hand and dumped into the trucks on top. Scores of ancient cities have been thus uncovered and made to reveal the secrets of the past.

Moreover, the fact that Canaan lay between Babylonia and Egypt is significant not only for the inner development of the Hebrew nation, but is of paramount importance for its external fortunes. Canaan was the bridge between Babylonia and Egypt. Along the highways of Canaan swept the armies of both, and in its plains they clashed in battle to decide the fate of monarchs and empires. For the road to conquest pointed north for Egypt and around the half circle for Babylonia. And as for Abraham's descendants, occupying this bridge, it was their amazing destiny to escape being completely crushed in the struggle between the two giants, and, with the passing of the ages, to see them both crumble into dust.

What influences did Abraham carry with him from the land of his birth? What civilization had developed in it? Who were the nations that had left their impress upon it? And, first, what was the general "lay of the land" of his native country and the regions through which he wandered?

§ 2. *Canaan Is the Western End of a "Fertile Crescent" Which Swings Around above the Arabian Desert to the Persian Gulf.*

THE Indian Ocean, as it beats upon the shores of Asia and Africa, cuts two deep grooves into those continents, the Persian Gulf on the east and the Red Sea on the west. Between them sprawls the vast peninsula



THE LANDS OF THE "FERTILE CRESCENT"

The "Crescent" is represented by the shaded portion.

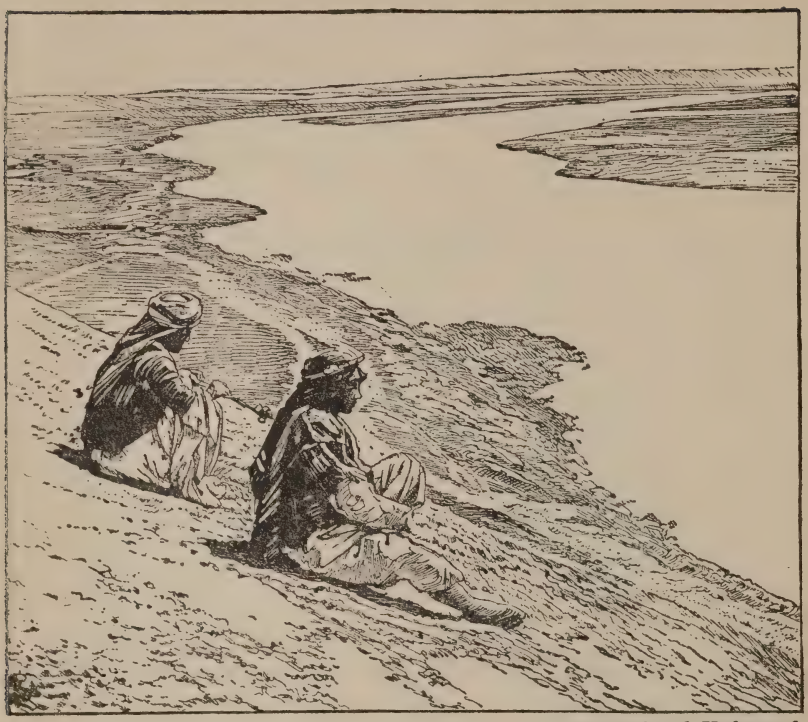
of Arabia, for the most part a desolate land of sandy and stony wastes fringed with fertile spots along the coasts. North of the desert rise the bleak mountain chains of Asia Minor, but lying between mountain and desert, a fertile strip rises not far from the Red Sea,

runs north through Palestine and Syria, bends at the feet of the northern mountains and continues south until it reaches the Persian Gulf. It is this band, or "Fertile Crescent," as it has been aptly named, that Abraham traversed in the course of his wanderings from Ur to Canaan.

For the next two thousand years, this "Fertile Crescent," and particularly, of course, Canaan, its western end, is going to be the principal stage on which the drama of Jewish history will be enacted. For a time, the action will shift to Egypt, separated from the "Fertile Crescent" by the Sinai Peninsula. Then the Hebrew tribes will again emerge from the desert to fulfill the covenant of Abraham and begin their national career by which mankind has been so profoundly affected.

Our concern is first not with the western end of the "Fertile Crescent" but with the eastern, not with Canaan, but with the land that came to be called Babylonia, where civilization had found a home for more than a thousand years before Abraham. The region where this civilization flourished, a region first called the Plain of Shinar, lies between the rivers Tigris and Euphrates. Rising not far from each other in the mountains of Asia Minor, these rivers flow almost parallel in a southeasterly direction to the Persian Gulf. To-day, the two rivers meet about a hundred miles from the mouth of the Gulf and empty into it together. In ancient times, however, the Gulf extended about one hundred and fifty miles deeper inland and the rivers emptied into it separately. Those one hundred and fifty miles represent the delta of both rivers filled in during the centuries by the deposits of soil which the rivers brought from the uplands.

The Plain of Shinar itself was the product of such



Underwood and Underwood.

THE PLAIN OF SHINAR

The flat, open character of the plain of Shinar where Sumerian and Babylonian civilization flourished, is well brought out in this picture. The river is the Euphrates.

action by the rivers during the preceding ages. An exceedingly fertile area resulted, which, nevertheless, owing to the meager rainfall, requires extensive irrigation in order to bring out all its fertility. In its days of prosperity this Plain maintained a system of irrigation canals which were also useful for draining off the surplus waters and preventing the country from being flooded when the rivers rose. In its days of decline, the canals and dikes fell into disrepair, and the Plain presented a desolate picture of barren stretches and swamps.

As we ascend the two rivers for about one hundred and sixty miles and emerge from the Plain of Shinar or Babylonia, the ground rises rapidly and the rivers, now flowing south of the "Fertile Crescent," cut their way through the upper part of the great Arabian Desert. Here the Euphrates, flowing through a deep gorge, can do very little for the fertility of the soil. Nevertheless, in the rainy season, the region is converted into grass-

Underwood and Underwood.

THE LAND OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN

This picture of the banks of the Tigris River just below Bagdad testifies to the luxurious fertility of which the country is capable. It explains why tradition placed the Garden of Eden in the Land of the Two Rivers.

lands where the nomad shepherds find sustenance for their flocks. Along these grasslands, the Hebrew shepherds probably tended their flocks before their migration into Canaan where they found green pastures all the year around.

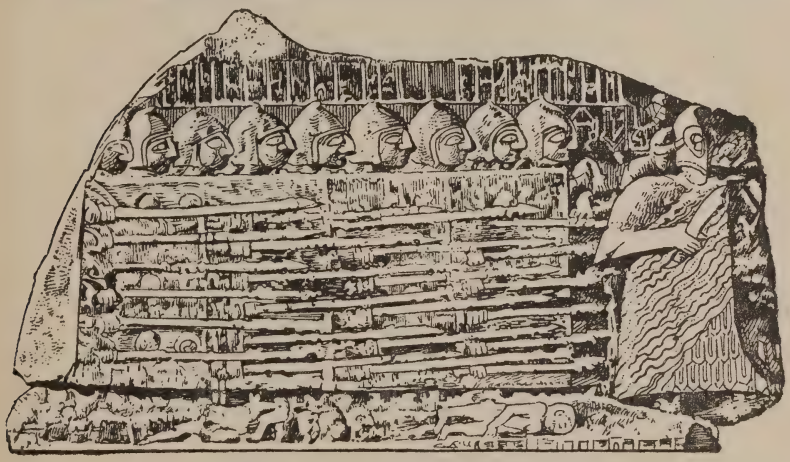
Leaving the rivers and cutting our way across these grasslands northward, we again strike the "Fertile Crescent" at a part which came to be known as Assyria. Here we locate Haran where Abraham heard the divine command to proceed to Canaan. On his way, he passed through the country of the powerful Amorites, and drove his flocks through the defiles of the Lebanon Mountains. He came in sight of Damascus and other cities of the Arameans, drove his flocks through the narrow valleys of northern Canaan and through the central plains until he reached the hillsides of the south. Here he found the Canaanites established in their walled cities and villages down to the edge of the Sinai Desert, the end of the "Fertile Crescent" which he had by now traversed from the eastern tip to the western.

The cold, bleak mountains to the north, and the hot, sterile desert to the south furnish the key to the history of Babylonia and the rest of the "Fertile Crescent." For, compared to the regions north and south, the Crescent was a veritable paradise. No wonder that one of the beliefs the Hebrews took with them from Babylonia was that the Garden of Eden where Adam and Eve, were it not for their weakness and folly, might have lived forever in perfect bliss, was located between the rivers Tigris and Euphrates! Both from the mountains and the desert, hordes of hungry men were lured by this paradise. They swept into it and fought over it, and now it was ruled by the men from the north and now by those from the south.

Having set the stage, we stop to see what was enacted on it from the dawn of civilization until the migration of the Hebrews into Canaan.

§ 3. *Babylonia, the Eastern End of the "Fertile Crescent," Was the Seat of an Old and Complex Civilization.*

WHEN, more than a thousand years before Abraham's birth, the mists that hide his native land from our view begin to lift, we discover the city of Ur inhabited by a people of uncertain race who are known as Sumerians. They are believed to have pushed their way onto the fertile plain between the two rivers from the northern mountains. Gradually, they learned how to drain the marshes and cut irrigation canals. They



A PHALANX OF SUMERIAN SPEARMEN

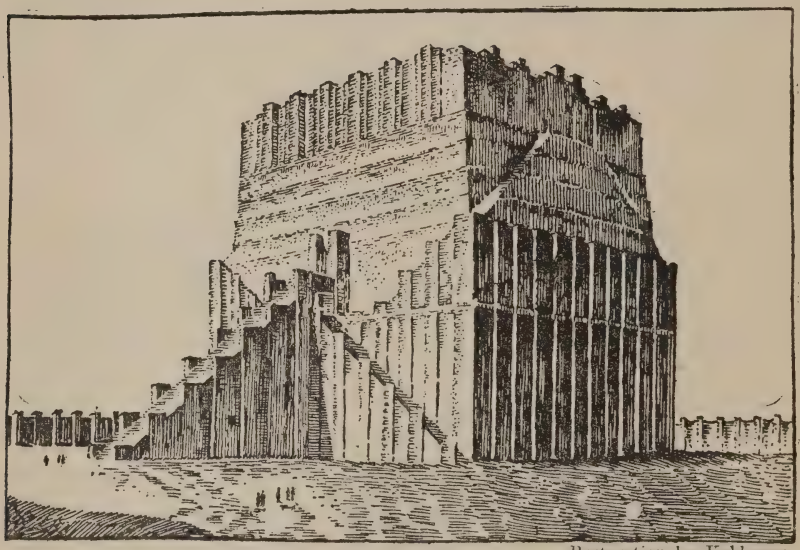
The warriors in serried ranks, led by their king, are trampling on the bodies of the vanquished enemy. The ancient artists were fond of picturing the corpses of the enemy under the feet of their heroes.

harvested rich crops of wheat and barley and raised donkeys, cattle, sheep and goats. Their donkey caravans moved up and down the land and their boats plied the Euphrates River.

By the year 3000 B.C.E.,* the southern portion of the plain between the two rivers was dotted with the cities of

* Before the common era.

the Sumerians, and the country as a whole was known as Sumer. Each city was an independent kingdom ruled by a monarch who was frequently at war with his neighbors. Every now and then, the nomads from the desert broke in upon the outlying cities and made off with the crops and the cattle, but for many centuries the Sumerian kings, who commanded well-drilled soldiers armed with



Restoration by Koldewey.

A Babylonian Tower Temple

This is a temple in honor of the god Marduk, the chief god of Babylon. It was about three hundred feet square and three hundred feet high. An imposing structure of this sort must have given rise to the tradition of the Tower of Babel.

shields and spears and fighting in close formation, held off the loose bands of straggling nomads whose principal weapon was the bow and arrow.

The king of a Sumerian city was at the same time its chief priest. The city's crowning structure was the temple to the gods which was built in the form of a lofty, massive tower with three immense stairways

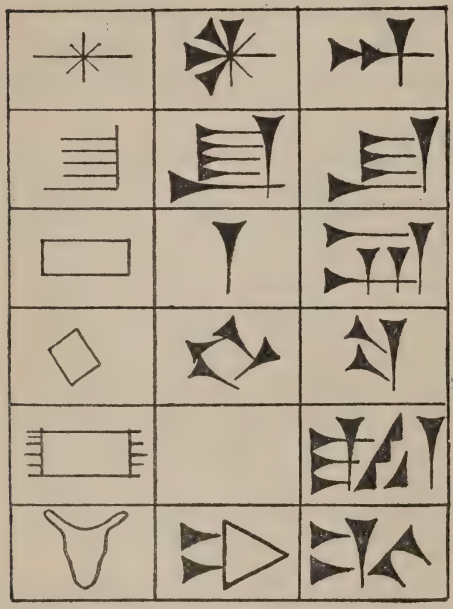
mounting up the frontal façade. Beginning about the middle of the pile, the tower rose in a series of "set-backs," like the latest American skyscrapers, with a strongly walled sanctuary surmounting the whole. The building material of these tower temples, as well as of the small square houses which clustered around them and made up a Sumerian city, consisted of sun-baked clay bricks, for the alluvial soil of the Plain of Shinar contained no stones.

IMPRESSION FROM A BABYLONIAN CYLINDER SEAL

This impression, produced on clay, represents the Sun god Shamash seated, and divine attendants bringing him offerings.

In these temples, the Sumerian priests and merchants, soldiers and peasants, worshiped their gods of earth and air, of sky and sea, bringing them offerings from their flocks and fields. They prayed the gods to send them plentiful crops and not to overwhelm them with floods. They recalled with special dread one terrible flood which had deluged the earth in the dim past. The story of this flood, in time, reached the Hebrews and became a part of their records as set down in the Bible. It was the flood which overwhelmed a wicked generation, and from which only Noah and the living things he took with him into his Ark were saved. The Hebrews carried away with them the memory of those huge towers also. And

in their imagination, those piles, dedicated to the worship of idols, took the form of impious and monstrous attempts to defy the One God who had revealed himself to Abraham. And hence arose the story of the Tower of Babel, where God confounded the designs of the wicked builders by confusing their speech, so that they no longer understood one another. Babel is only another name for Babylon, the city which, as we shall see, eventually became the capital of a new power and gave its name to the entire country.



From Picture to Cuneiform

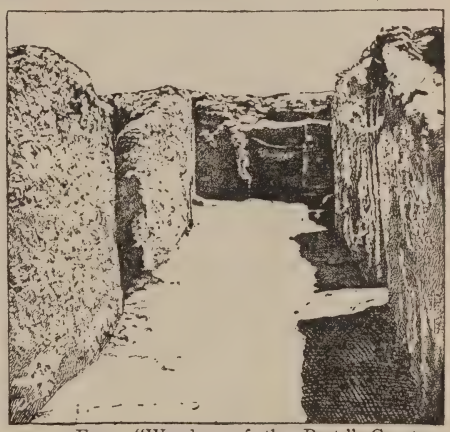
The first column on the left shows a series of picture signs. The third shows the same signs as they developed into cuneiform symbols. The second column represents an intermediate stage. The pictures are a star, a hand, a house, the sun, a comb and an ox.

The clay that the Sumerians used for building material served them for still another highly useful purpose. On thin tablets made of this material the Sumerians kept their records. They developed a system of writing, the characters of which consisted of wedge-shaped strokes impressed upon the soft clay with a square-tipped instrument. When the tablet hardened, an exceedingly durable record remained. For signatures to these records they used ingenious seals consisting of small, cylindrical stones, carved with beautiful pictures and designs, which, when the little cylinder

was rolled on the soft clay, were reproduced on the tablets. It is the first instance of printing on record, although it was done, of course, without ink.

The Sumerian writing is known as "cuneiform" from the Latin word *cuneus* which means "a wedge." Originally each character was a picture of the object it represented, but gradually, as the necessity for speed increased, each picture was reduced to a series of rapid strokes, until, in time, a combination of strokes represented not an object but a sound. The Sumerian characters, however, never represented single sounds, as do the letters of our alphabet, but syllables.

By digging into the mounds where the old Sumerian cities lie buried, many of these cuneiform inscriptions have been unearthed and their language deciphered. Thus, a great deal of the civilization of these first known inhabitants of the valley of the two rivers, their government and religion, their military, social and economic systems, their art and literature, has been brought to light. Among other things which the Oriental world, including the Jews, inherited from them was their calendar and their system of weights and measures. Their



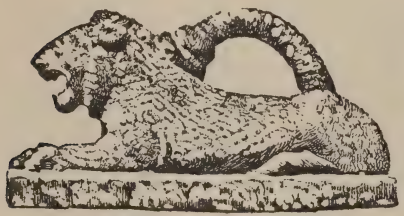
From "Wonders of the Past," Courtesy G. P. Putnam's Sons.

AN ANCIENT SUMERIAN STREET UNEARTHED

This is one of the excavated streets of the Sumerian city of Eridu, which was an important seaport on the Gulf of Persia. The site of Eridu is now over one hundred and fifty miles inland owing to the filling in of the head of the Gulf.

year was divided into twelve months, each one beginning with the new moon. This is known as the lunar year, and since the solar year, upon which the seasons depend, is nearly eleven days longer, they added an extra month every two or three years in order to make the lunar year catch up with the solar. Their unit of weight was the mina, in Hebrew *maneh,* which was divided into sixty shekels. It is interesting to note that the mina was in time adopted by the western nations. It is the equivalent of our pound.

The Sumerians, it is believed, had originally hailed from the mountains and now it was the turn of the people of the desert. About the year 2750 B.C.E., a powerful leader named Sargon arose among the nomads of the north in the region called Akkadia, and he succeeded in putting an end to the rule of the Sumerians in the Great Plain.



A Babylonian Weight

An inscription at the base states that this weight, beautifully fashioned into a couchant lion, is a *maneh,* which is approximately equal to our pound. The *maneh* is frequently mentioned in the Bible.

The Akkadians belonged to the great Semitic race which, according to Hebrew tradition, was descended from Shem, the eldest son of Noah. All of the nations who had their start in the desert plains, it appears, were Semites. To-day, the two principal representatives of the Semitic race are the Jews and the Arabs. In Abraham's day, there belonged to this race the Hebrews, the Babylonians, the Arameans, the Phoenicians, the Canaanites and others. On the arena of history, the Semites have proved themselves a remark-

ably gifted and versatile race. In the arts of peace as well as of war, and above all, in the realm of creative religion, they have made invaluable contributions to the world's culture and civilization.

After defeating the Sumerian phalanxes of spearmen and subduing their city kingdoms, the Akkadian bowmen took up their abode by the side of the conquered, gave up their nomad ways of life and gradually mingled with the Sumerians. After several centuries, the rulers styled themselves "Kings of Sumer and Akkad." For a long time, their long beards and locks distinguished the descendants of the Semitic nomads from the clean-shaven Sumerians. The Akkadians learned the cuneiform syllabic signs and used them for writing their own Semitic language. They adopted many other elements of Sumerian civilization and under the leadership, first, of the city of Ur and then of other cities, "Sumer and Akkad" flourished as a great commercial civilization for a period of about four or five centuries.

PORTRAIT OF AN ANCIENT SUMERIAN

Note the clean-shaven face and the non-Semitic features. The Semites preferred to let their beards grow.

About the year 2200 B.C.E., a new wave of Semites began to sweep over the plain between the two rivers. They were the Amorites, and they came from Syria. Some of them took possession of a little town on the Euphrates called Babylon. Gradually, this little town fought its way to supremacy in the land of "Sumer

and Akkad." Then, about the year 2050 B.C.E., there arose a remarkably strong and able king in Babylon, a new Sargon. This was the famous Hammurabi, who conquered all the cities of the south and made his own city the capital of a new kingdom. And so now we may speak of this kingdom as Babylonia.

HAMMURABI RECEIVING HIS LAWS FROM THE SUN GOD

This relief was carved on top of a stone shaft around which were engraved the laws of Hammurabi. The shaft has been found and the laws deciphered. The relief shows the monarch receiving the laws from the god who is seated at the right, with flames issuing from his shoulders.

The new Semitic ruler organized the country and systematized its life as had never been done before. His messengers, bearing his commands inscribed on clay tablets, scoured the country, and the royal will became supreme. The canals and dikes were kept in repair, taxes were paid promptly, and justice was properly executed. Hammurabi's fame is even greater as a legislator than as a conqueror or administrator. He collected all the old laws that were in vogue, added new ones that were necessary, and systematized them into a single code. These codified laws he then caused to be engraved on a stone shaft at the top of which a bas-relief was sculptured picturing Hammurabi in the act of receiving the laws from the god of the sun.

Hammurabi's code contains many laws that satisfy our modern sense of justice. They contain others that are based on the old desert principle of "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth." In the main, they are the laws of a commercial society. The interests of the merchant are supreme. Even religion was associated with trade, the temples engaging in banking, commerce and land-holding. The Babylonian donkey caravans penetrated into the northern mountains and around into Syria, and together with their bales of wool and leather, they carried Babylonian ideas and practices which were thus spread throughout those lands. Babylonian civilization became the mother civilization of Western Asia.

A Passage from the Code of Hammurabi

These lines contain the famous *lex talionis* or law of retaliation. They read as follows: "If a man destroy the eye of a patrician's son, his own eye shall be destroyed. . . . If a man destroy a workingman's eye or break his bone, he shall pay one *maneh* of silver. If a man destroy the eye of a slave . . . he shall pay half his value."

While the old Sumerian gods were still worshiped, the first place was captured by the gods of the Semites. Marduk, the god of Babylon, ousted the Sumerian god Enlil as the head of the pantheon, and Ishtar or Astarte, the goddess of love, rose to be the principal female deity. The priests became adepts in the art of divination or predicting the future, whether by

means of the stars or by examining the liver of sheep slain in sacrifice.

Abraham the Hebrew is believed to have been a contemporary of Hammurabi, although the dates are extremely uncertain. It is certain, however, that the Hebrews acquired a great deal from the Babylonians whether by direct contact with them, as must have been the case with Abraham, or indirectly through the people whose lands they traversed and who maintained commercial relations with the Babylonians. We have already referred to the calendar, the system of weights and measures, and certain memories of distant events which found their way into the literature of the Hebrews. Among other cultural heirlooms, attention is often called to similarities between the Biblical and Babylonian accounts of creation and between the Babylonian *shabattum,* the day when the moon began to wane and when special precautions were enjoined, and the Hebrew Sabbath. Resemblances are also pointed out between Babylonian and Hebrew ideas of *sheol,* or life after death, and between Babylonian and Hebrew ethical concepts. Some have even gone so far as to deny originality to the Hebrews by referring to the Babylonian sources of their civilization.

Such a conclusion, however, is superficial and false. For the differences are vastly greater and more important than the similarities. No doubt, the Hebrews were influenced by the Babylonians, but they began where the latter left off. Babylonian ideas arose from a conception of the gods as powers of nature, blind, tyrannical and capricious, whom man must endeavor to appease by homage and sacrifice. Hebrew ideas, on the other hand, are interpenetrated with the sentiment of the One God

who is righteous and purposeful, and whom man must serve by obeying His laws of justice and purity. Out of this fundamental divergence in religious notions sprang those differences between Hebrew and Babylonian civilization which are more striking than their resemblances. The Babylonian *shabattum,* for example, a day of superstitious dread and gloom, became the Hebrew Sabbath, a day devoted to repose from toil and to holiness when God Himself rested from his labors of creation.

HITTITE SOLDIERS

The figures of these warriors, armed with spear, shield and plumed helmet, were taken from a bas-relief found in the palace of the Hittite kings at Carchemish in northern Syria.

Shortly after the death of Hammurabi, the struggle in the valley of the two rivers between the men from the mountains and the men from the plains recommenced. This time the men from the mountains, a people known as the Kassites, came with a powerful ally, the tame horse, who appears in history for the first time. They came from the east; and from the west, a new people, the Hittites, also swarmed down upon the valley and fought with the highlanders and with the native inhabitants. In the end the horsemen were victorious. But they were rude barbarians and under their rule Babylonian civilization was blotted out. The dikes and canals were ruined, the country became desolate.

For a thousand years, until the coming of a new

desert horde, the Chaldeans, Babylonia is practically absent from the arena of history. In the meantime, in the northern uplands of the valley, Assyria, with fire and sword, had established her far-flung empire.

But we may delay the entry of Assyria and Chaldea into our story until they cross the path of the Hebrew nation. To that path we now return.

§ 4. *Under the Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the Hebrew Nomads in Canaan Grow in Wealth and Numbers.*

FROM the very start, the career of the Hebrews in Canaan was exceedingly eventful. It was bound to be so, for they were a band of foot-loose shepherds, seeking wells and pasture in a land inhabited by a settled population with whom they had either to establish friendly relations or engage in bickering and warfare. We do not find them stopping very long in one locality. Now they pitch their tents on the northern hillsides near Shechem, now they stop at Beth-el, now they have drifted down to the south in the hills near Beer-sheba or to the coastal plain at Gerar. And once, when the rains have failed and the land is in the grip of famine, Abraham takes his people and his flocks across the Desert of Shur into Egypt, a land of wealth and splendor which lured the starving shepherds in much the same way as America draws to-day the gaze of the oppressed and impoverished Jews of Europe.

But the time had not yet come for the Hebrews to undergo their long sojourn in Egypt. Back to Canaan went Abraham and Lot richer and more powerful than ever. Too numerous now to dwell together, their respec-

CANAAN AND HER IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORS

tive shepherds fall to fighting over the wells, and there occurs one of those separations that are usual in the life of the nomad. "Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me," says Abraham to his nephew. "If thou wilt take the left

hand then I will go to the right." And the younger man follows the advice of the older and goes off and pitches his tents in the neighborhood of Sodom at the head of the Dead Sea, one of those highly civilized but corrupt cities of Canaan.

He is a wise and peace-loving man, this first Patriarch of the Jewish people, but when the need arises he knows how to fight also. There is a war in the land in which four kings of the East are pitted against five kings of Canaan. One of the eastern kings is Amraphel of Shinar who is believed to be none other than Hammurabi of Babylonia. In this war Abraham is not concerned, but when word reaches him that his nephew Lot has been led off a prisoner together with his household, he assembles his followers and allies and falling upon the kings of the East, he smites them and rescues his kinsman. And the kings of the neighboring cities go forth to meet him and do him homage.

The Patriarch is also generous and hospitable with that large-handed hospitality so characteristic of the lordly desert sheiks. His heart goes out in kindness to his fellow men. When the sinful cities of Sodom and Gomorrah are about to be destroyed, Abraham is represented as pleading to God on their behalf and he obtains the promise that the cities should be spared if only ten righteous men were found within them. But those cities are wholly wicked, so they are buried in a hail of fire and brimstone. It is entirely in accord with Abraham's conception of God that he should regard the destruction of those corrupt cities, buried obviously by a volcanic eruption, as an act of retributive justice.

In his old age he was granted the boon he no longer dared to hope for. His wife Sarah bore him a son,

whom they named Isaac. The direct line for the further life of his race, and for the fulfillment of the covenant so frequently renewed, was now assured. By his Egyptian concubine, Hagar, he was the father also of Ishmael who became the founder of another race, the Arabs, but the great covenant is to be carried out only through the seed of Isaac.

And now we read the strange story of a journey that Abraham and Isaac make to the top of a hill where the father is to sacrifice his beloved son. But when "Abraham stretched forth his hand and took the knife to slay his son, the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven and said: Lay not thy hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him!" The story deals with a time when human sacrifice was rife among the nations of Canaan and it was written down at a time when it was still common among them. It reflects, with powerful dramatic effect, the Hebrew conception of a God who desires not human sacrifices but abhors them. Something there was in the spirit of these Hebrews which enabled the true God to make Himself known to them and to no other people of that day.

Imbued with a sense of selection, the Patriarch is exceedingly jealous for the purity of his race. His son must not take to wife one of the daughters of Canaan, for the land is full of idolatry and impurity. So his faithful servant Eliezer journeys to distant Haran, where Abraham's kin is still living, and returns with his young master's cousin Rebekah, who becomes the second great Mother of the Jewish race.

In the meantime, the first, Sarah, had died. After mourning for her, Abraham "rose up from before his dead" and for the first time he felt he had to have a

piece of land as a permanent possession. For he was still "a stranger and sojourner" in the land of Canaan, and now he needed a burying place. And finding himself near the ancient city of Hebron, he went in and bought the field of Machpelah, where, in a cave, he buried his dead. The fulfillment of the covenant began with the possession of ground around which gather the strongest and tenderest human emotions.

Courtesy Brentano's, New York.

MODERN HEBRON

The large building in the foreground with the turreted walls is a Mohammedan Mosque erected on the traditional site of the Cave of Machpelah.

In the fullness of years Abraham, too, was gathered to his fathers, and Isaac, having laid his father to rest beside his mother Sarah in the cave of Machpelah, became in turn the leader of the Hebrew shepherds. "And," we are told, "the man waxed great and grew more and more until he became very great. And he had possessions of flocks and possessions of herds and a great

household." Moved by fear, Abimelech, king of the Philistines, among whom he is stopping, makes a treaty of peace with him.

Of the twin sons Rebekah bore him, Esau, the intrepid hunter, fell away from the pure Hebrew line by marrying Hittite women who were "a bitterness of spirit unto Isaac and to Rebekah." He and his descendants have no part or parcel in the Great Covenant. But the gentle shepherd Jacob, fleeing from the wrath of his rude brother, reached the land of his mother's birth and took to wife his two cousins Rachel and Leah. Thus, Jacob, afterwards called Israel, continued the pure line. He became the third great Patriarch and the father of twelve sons, the progenitors of the twelve tribes of Israel.

For a number of years, the bond of union between the Hebrews, or the children of Israel as we may now call them, and the land of Canaan appeared to be broken. Jacob dwelt with his uncle Laban in Haran, where all his sons, with the exception of Benjamin his youngest, were born. But soon the longing for the homeland began to move in Jacob's soul and he said to his uncle: "Send me away that I may go unto mine own place and to my country." And the children of Israel, led by Israel himself, returned to Canaan.

Now the little clan that had "crossed over" under Abraham had become twelve, for, although the narrative speaks of them as individuals, twelve brothers, children of the same father, Jacob, each of them in all likelihood represented a separate clan. They were Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar and Zebulun whose mother was Leah; Gad, Asher, Dan and Naphtali who were born of

concubines; and Joseph and Benjamin who were the sons of Rachel.

Their return must have struck the inhabitants of the land like an invasion. We can imagine how the Canaanites must have shut tight the massive gates of their cities when, from the towers on the walls, their sentinels spied the Israelites winding through the valleys and up the hillsides. We can also imagine the wonder with which the rude herdsmen, shielding their eyes against the glare of the sun, gazed up at the glittering walls and towers. More than once, no doubt, the Israelites clashed with the inhabitants of the land, and one conflict, we read, led to a raid on the city of Shechem by Simeon and Levi, who avenged themselves with great cruelty on its inhabitants for an insult inflicted on their sister Dinah. Other cities were glad to make treaties with them, and still others were forced to call on Egypt for help against them.

Upon the inhabitants of the land, cooped up in their walled cities, these free and foot-loose shepherds must have looked with contempt mingled with more or less envy. Some of them, no doubt, settled down as tillers of the soil, temporarily if not permanently. Even of Isaac, stopping with the Philistines, it is told that he "sowed in that land and found in the same year a hundredfold." But in the main, they continued the life of nomads. It was a way of life which countless generations of their desert ancestors had followed before them. It is a way of life which the desert folk of to-day still follow, as did their ancestors before the dawn of history. Let us, before proceeding with our story, examine this way of life a little more closely.

§ 5. *The Nomad Leads a Peculiar Life of His Own, Hard, Dangerous and Free.*

IN THE story of Abraham, there is one incident which presents a particularly charming picture of nomadic life and customs. The Patriarch is sitting in the shade of his tent door "in the heat of the day," when he sees three men approaching. He runs forward to meet them and bows down before them. "Pass not away," he begs them, "from your servant. Let now a little water be fetched and wash your feet and recline yourselves under the tree. And I will fetch a morsel of bread and stay ye your heart." The "morsel of bread," which Abraham offered his guests was a veritable feast. It consisted of a calf "tender and good" which his servant dressed, as well as curd and milk and cakes of fine flour fresh baked by Sarah. "And he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat." Such was the lordly hospitality of the nomad which the Hebrew patriarch practiced.

The incident reveals, also, a goodly part of the economic aspect of nomadic life. Contact with the settled Canaanites had provided Abraham with some of the products of the soil, like wheat, which rarely entered into the diet of the nomad. His food consisted principally of the milk of goats and camels and of the flesh of sheep. His wealth was made up of his flocks and herds, his slaves and his equipment of tents, implements and weapons. The pasture lands belonged to no one. They were free to the first comer. His most valuable servant was and still is the camel. The horse, which is more a pride and a luxury to the Beduin of to-day than a necessity, was still unknown in the time of the Patriarchs. It had not yet been brought down from the highlands north

of Babylonia which appear to have been its original home.

The life of the nomad depends upon the life of his animals. In his search of pasturage and water for them, he roams from one stretch of grassland to another and pitches his black flat tents, made of cloth of goat's or camel's hair, as near a well of water as possible. As a rule, however, the circuit of any particular tribe of

Ewing Galloway.

A Nomad Encampment

Except for the water well, practically everything that makes up the life of the nomad is shown in this picture: the flocks of sheep, the simple tent and the pasture land. Compare the rude primitiveness of this scene with the magnificent Egyptian villa shown on p. 8.

nomads is more or less definite. They visit different sections of it in turn.

Water is even more precious to the nomad than grass. The striking of a well is greeted with songs of rejoicing. Thus sang Israel in the desert:

Spring up O well; sing ye unto it:
The well which the princes digged,
Which the nobles of the people delved
With the scepter and with their staves.[1]

And more than anything else, it is the wells around which rival tribes clash.

Pasture and water, and then shade — these are the three great boons which a land may offer to the nomad. What more welcome "in the heat of the day" than the shade of a tree? All three of these gifts have entered into the songs and parables of the nomad. While to the men of the north the shadow connotes gloom and menace, to the nomad it means comfort and shelter.

The greatest enemy of the nomad is drought. It is this enemy which sends him swarming upon the regions where men live in villages and cities. His life is one of hardship and danger. It is well described in Jacob's complaint to Laban:

"These twenty years have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she-goats have not cast their young,[2] and the rams of thy flocks have I not eaten. That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bore the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day or stolen by night. Thus I was: in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night;[3] and my sleep fled from mine eyes."

The social and political structure of a nomad group is as simple as its economic system is primitive. The nomad has no state and pays no taxes. His social unit is the clan, which is merely an extension of the family; and a number of clans, all reverting to a remote common

[1] *i.e.*, by order of the lawgivers.
[2] *i.e.*, have not given birth prematurely.
[3] Very hot days are often followed by very cold nights.

ancestor, may constitute a tribe. At the head of each clan is the patriarch who usually combines with his secular authority the functions of a priest.

It is of great importance, however, to note that a nomad society is an exceedingly democratic society. The individual has none of the servility which characterizes a settled civilization. The life he leads, a life of movement and freedom and danger, develops self-reliance and independence. His bearing is marked by simplicity and

THE NOMAD AT HOME

The nomad, his family and his dog are here shown at the opening of his tent.

dignity. He obeys his chief not from compulsion but from choice. An idea like the divine right of rulers could never arise among nomads. The ruler, on the contrary, has always to reckon with the will of his followers. He leads them, but only where they themselves desire to go. In an emergency the leader is elected. We shall see how, when necessity later compelled the children of Israel to subject themselves to a king, they insisted on electing

him. And, with the instincts of a nomad still strong in his heart, the prophet Samuel warned them solemnly against the restraints on their liberty which a king would impose upon them.

At the same time, the nomads possess the fault of this virtue of independence. They are factious, exceedingly hard to unite for a common end, and, if united, fall quickly apart again. We shall see this fault cropping up again and again in the story of the children of Israel in whose veins the nomad blood was still active.

With all his independence, it is obvious that the individual must cling to his clan for social status and safety. The unattached nomad can only be, like Cain, "a fugitive and a wanderer in the earth," with every man's hand against him. But, in the absence of state and police, how are the life and property of the nomad protected? As for property, that of his own clan or tribe he regards as sacred, but that belonging to another is fair booty. Driving off one another's cattle is a favorite occupation and sport among the nomad Arab tribes of to-day. The property of the settled villager is, of course, even fairer prey. Nomad raids along the fringes of civilized communities are of frequent occurrence.

For the protection of life in the desert, there existed, as there still exists, the custom of blood revenge. This custom lays down that a murder must be avenged by the kin of the victim on the murderer or his kin. The fear of exposing himself to the blood avenger naturally acts as a restraint on the would-be killer. For blood revenge is more than a custom. It is a supreme duty and virtue. The other great duty and virtue of the desert, a duty and virtue of an entirely different order, is hospitality which is so touchingly portrayed in the

story of Abraham and his three guests. Without hospitality, the wanderer would succumb to the hardships and dangers of the desert, to hunger and thirst and wild beasts and savage men.

Blood revenge appears to us to be as horrible as hospitality is beautiful. But it is well to remember that both customs arose out of the peculiar exigencies of nomadic life. Nevertheless, blood revenge persists even after the nomads have adopted a settled mode of life. For men cling to their customs even after the conditions that produced and justified them have disappeared.

A Sacred Pillar

Slabs of stone, like the one shown in the picture, were erected by nomads to mark spots sacred to local gods.

As for the nomad's religion, his beliefs and practices can scarcely be reduced to a system. He believed in a large variety of gods and demons whose favor he endeavored to obtain by sacrifices of lambs and sheep and goats. In his savage zeal or trembling fear, he even sacrificed his first-born son, for he naturally believed that his god would be best pleased with what he himself regarded as most precious. His lively fancy lodged a deity in every salient spot of his itinerary, a well, a grove of trees, an overhanging cliff or a craggy summit. It was the god of the place, and every tribe had one as its special protector. And if the

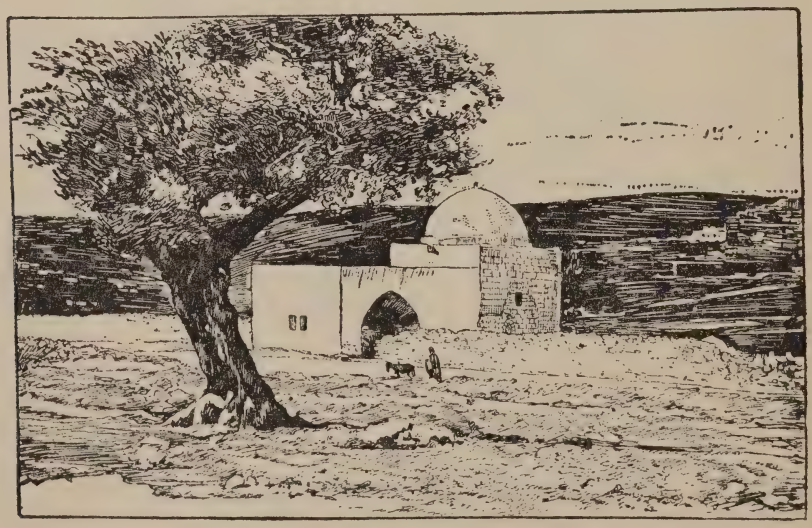
tribe moved, it accepted, as a rule, the god of its new habitation.

The origin and significance of many of the religious beliefs and practices of the nomad are lost in the obscurity of antiquity. Some of them, like the *teraphim* or household gods, bear traces of ancestor worship. Many explanations have been offered for the origin of the rite of circumcision which was performed not only by the Hebrews but by many other nations, both nomad and settled, usually at the beginning of adolescence. The nomad, of course, had no temples although he recognized certain spots as specially sacred to his tribal deity. At such places he erected pillars of stone or altars of rough stone slabs on which he laid his sacrifices. They were ruthless and greedy, these gods of his, having more of the character of demons than of gods. What they demanded of their worshipers was sacrifice rather than pure lives and just dealing.

But we return now to the children of Israel, those nomads whose God was like unto none other among the gods of the nomads or the dwellers in cities.

§ 6. *Impelled by Drought and Famine, the Children of Israel Go Down into Egypt.*

IT IS altogether likely that in those remote days the great bulk of the children of Israel were scarcely to be distinguished, even with respect to religion, from the other nomads of the desert or from those who had won a footing among the settled population. The Bible narrates, for example, how Rachel stole her father's household gods on the eve of her departure for Canaan. Having arrived there, Jacob, we are told, "said unto his household and to all that were with him: Put away the strange gods that are among you." Furthermore, the cruelty and treachery of which the sons of Jacob, especially Simeon and Levi, were guilty toward the inhabitants of Shechem, provoked though they were by



THE TOMB OF RACHEL

This is the site of the traditional tomb of Rachel near Beth-lehem. The little domed building was erected by Moses Montefiore (1784–1885) to replace an older structure that had fallen into ruin.

the insult against their sister, stamps them as being no higher in their standards of conduct than the others.

But, at least, in the leader himself, a knowledge of the God of Abraham persisted. To Him, Jacob built his altars and brought his sacrifices. For the worship of Him, he ordered his people to put away their strange gods. Nor is it going to be a royal road by which the people will attain to a knowledge of His laws and a willingness to obey them. It is going to be a long and painful evolution. That road represents the steep and stony march of the Jewish people through history.

Gradually the children of Israel were shedding their nomad ways of life and adopting the settled life of their neighbors. Jacob, we learn, had bought himself a parcel of ground near Shechem. When the land is stricken with famine he sends his sons to Egypt to buy corn, for bread, apparently, had become a necessary article of their diet. Jacob, we are told, "dwelt in the land of his father's sojournings, in the land of Canaan," and some adoption of the ways of the land, or assimilation, was inevitable.

Nevertheless, they were still, in the main, nomads. They were nomads by instinct and disposition. Stock breeding and pasturing were still their leading occupation. The field and cave of Machpelah were still their principal possession in the land. There Jacob and Esau had laid to rest their father Isaac when, "being old and full of days, he was gathered to his people." There, also, Jacob buried his wife Leah. Rachel, having died in giving birth to Benjamin, was buried near Beth-lehem. "And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave; the same is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day." Thousands of years later, Moses Montefiore, whose name will recur in

this story of the Jewish people, built a tomb on the spot where Jacob set up the pillar. To this tomb the children of Israel still come to pray, for the great memories that cluster around it.

The time for permanent settlement had not yet arrived. Another experience in a strange land lay in store for them before they might inherit Canaan, an experience which left an indelible impress upon their

STORING UP GRAIN IN ANCIENT EGYPT

The grain is being winnowed at the right, and carried to a two-storied warehouse at the left. In the center sits a recorder who keeps count of the number of baskets that are being taken in. An overseer, club in hand, is following the two carriers into the warehouse.

memories. Having had their beginnings in Babylonia, they were destined to come into close contact with the other great civilization of that day, the civilization that flourished in Egypt.

We are brought to the story of Joseph and his brothers, of Joseph whom Israel loved "more than all his children because he was the son of his old age," and whom his brothers, in their fierce resentment, sold to a caravan of Ishmaelite merchants from Gilead, "with their camels bearing spicery and balm and ladanum, going to carry it down to Egypt." The story reveals the first serious strife among the children of Israel. For they were, no doubt, a rough and unruly lot, and Israel

was getting old, and his authority among them had grown weak.

And the well-known story goes on to tell how Joseph rose to great power in the court of the Pharaoh and, by his foresight and administrative skill, saved the land from the disastrous effects of a seven years' famine. And when his brothers from Canaan, driven by the same drought and famine, come to Egypt to buy corn, he obtains permission from the Pharaoh for them to bring their flocks and graze them in the district of Goshen in the eastern section of the Nile Delta, one of the most fertile regions of Lower Egypt.

This story of Joseph and his brothers has touched the human heart more powerfully, perhaps, than any story that has been told. It throbs with pathos and passion, with human greatness and human weakness. It reveals a people of highly sensitive and complex nature. The charm and grandeur of its simplicity are unsurpassable. What, for example, can be more moving than the passage in the story which tells how Joseph saw again his brother Benjamin, and how he struggled with the emotion which overwhelmed him and which, at the same time, he must hide:

> And he lifted up his eyes and saw Benjamin his brother, his mother's son, and said: "Is this your youngest brother of whom ye spoke unto me?" And he said: "God be gracious unto thee, my son." And Joseph made haste; for his heart yearned toward his brother; and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber and wept there.

From the parched valleys around Shechem, from the ravines and craggy hillsides near Hebron, the children of Israel pulled up the pegs of their tents, and, driving their lean flocks before them, streamed south across the

IN THE LAND OF GOSHEN

This is a modern Egyptian village in the Nile Delta where Goshen has been located. The houses are clustered on the river's edge amid palms and acacia trees. The obelisk rising above the tallest palms is a reminder of Egypt's ancient civilization.

desert and into Goshen in the land of Egypt. Several centuries had now probably passed since this people was started on its way by its first Patriarch. And now we follow them into a new and strange land.

TOPIC ONE: LITERATURE

1. THE CREATION

(GENESIS * 1–2 [3])

THE Biblical account of creation is an epic poem of incomparable grandeur. The religious concept on which it is based, the idea of one omnipotent Spirit, beneficent and

* Genesis, the first book of the Bible, is so called because it begins with an account of the *genesis* or origin of the world. Its Hebrew name is *Bereshit,* which is its first word and means "in the beginning."

The story of creation in Genesis is followed by that of Adam and Eve who, having disobeyed the divine command not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, are driven from the Garden of Eden where they had been living in perfect bliss. Their sin brings suffering and toil to mankind. Cain, their eldest born son, commits the first murder, slaying his brother Abel. The descendants of Cain and those of Seth, another son of Adam and Eve, people the earth, but, with the exception of Noah, they are all wicked, and God sends down a great flood in which they are all destroyed. Noah is commanded to build himself an Ark, in which he saves himself together with his family, as well as two, male and female, of every species of animal. Noah's three sons are Shem, Ham and Japheth, and each one becomes the progenitor of a race of mankind, the Semitic race being descended from Shem.

The rest of the Book of Genesis and, in fact, all the other books of the Bible, are concerned almost wholly with a branch of the descendants of Shem, the Hebrews. Beginning with Terah, father of Abraham, and continuing with the Patriarchs, the twelve sons of Jacob or Israel, the career of Joseph in Egypt and, finally, the settlement of the Hebrews in Egypt, our text follows closely the account as given in the Book of Genesis.

The following additional selections from the Book of Genesis are recommended for reading:

a. How Eve Was Seduced by the Serpent (Chap. 3).
b. The First Murder (Chap. 4 [1-15]).
c. The Story of the Great Flood (Chaps. 6–9 [17]).
d. The Story of the Tower of Babel (Chap. 11 [1-9]).
e. The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Chaps. 18 [16]–19 [28]).
f. The Purchase of the Cave of Machpelah (Chap. 23).
g. Jacob's Meeting with Esau (Chaps. 32–33).
h. Jacob's Blessing (Chap. 49 [1-27]).

purposeful, Whose word alone calls heaven and earth into being, may be called the high-water mark in the religious thought of mankind. The discoveries of modern geology and anthropology cannot affect the beauty of the epic, nor the power of its basic idea to satisfy the spiritual hunger of man.

Scholars have recognized in this account traces of the influence of Babylonian creation myths discovered on clay tablets in Nineveh. In those myths Marduk, the chief god of Babylon, after being invested with leadership by the other gods, engages in a fearful combat with Tiamat and her brood of monsters, who represent the watery deep or Chaos. "Stand!" cries Marduk to Tiamat, "I and Thou — come let us fight!" The story then continues as follows:

Tiamat, when she heard this,
Was like one possessed; she lost her reason.
Tiamat cried out vehemently with high voice,
Like roots divided in twain her legs trembled.
She uttered an incantation, she cast a charm,
And the gods of battle demanded their weapons.
Then took their stand Tiamat and the leader of the gods, Marduk;
For the fight they aproached, for the battle they drew near
The Lord spread out his net and enclosed her,
The evil wind from behind he thrust into her face.
As Tiamat opened her mouth to its full extent,
The evil wind he drove in, so that her lips could not close.
With the mighty winds he filled her belly;
Her courage was taken away, and she opened her mouth.
He let fall the spear, he burst open her belly,
He cut through her inward parts, he pierced her heart,
He bound her and her life destroyed;
Her body he cast down, upon it he stood.

After slaying Tiamat, Marduk proceeds as follows:

The flesh of the monster he divided; he formed a cunning plan.
He split her open like a flat fish into two halves,
One half of her he established and made a covering of the heavens,
He drew a bolt, he established a guard,
And not to let her waters come out, he commanded.

Having thus conquered the watery chaos, Marduk proceeds to create the stars and man whose only reason for existence is to worship the gods and build temples in their honor.

A comparison of the Hebrew and Babylonian accounts of creation reveals the immeasurable superiority of the Hebrew religious conceptions.

IN THE beginning God created the heaven and the earth. Now the earth was unformed and void, and darkness was upon the

THE GOD MARDUK BATTLING WITH THE MONSTER TIAMAT
(From an Assyrian sculpture.)

face of the deep; and the spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters.

And God said: "Let there be light." And there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And there was evening [1] and there was morning, one day.

And God said: "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the

[1] The Jews still reckon the day not from morning to morning, but from sunset to sunset.

waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

And God said: "Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters called He Seas; and God saw that it was good.

And God said: "Let the earth put forth grass,[2] herb yielding seed, and fruit-trees bearing fruit after its kind, wherein is the seed thereof, upon the earth." And it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, herb yielding seed after its kind, and tree bearing fruit, wherein is the seed thereof, after its kind; and God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.

And God said: "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth."[3] And it was so. And God made the two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; and the stars. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

And God said: "Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let fowl fly about the earth in the open firmament of heaven." And God created the great sea-monsters, and every living creature that creepeth, wherewith the waters swarmed, after its kind, and every winged fowl after its kind; and God

[2] "Grass" here means everything that grows out of the earth.

[3] The heavenly bodies are for two purposes: to give light and to measure time and seasons. Other nations worshiped the heavenly bodies as deities.

saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying: "Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth." And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

And God said: "Let the earth bring forth the living creature after its kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after its kind."[4] And it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after its kind, and the cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the ground after its kind; and God saw that it was good.

And God said: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." And God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. And God blessed them; and God said unto them: "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that creepeth upon the earth."

And God said: "Behold, I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed — to you it shall be for food; and to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is a living soul, I have given every green herb for food." And it was so. And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.[5] And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

And the heaven and the earth were finished,[6] and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day,

[4] *i.e.*, domestic animals, reptiles and wild animals.

[5] "It was very good." This phrase, so often repeated in the account of Creation, is an eloquent expression of the fundamental attitude of the Hebrew towards life, the attitude of optimism.

[6] *i.e.*, the stars of heaven, and the inhabitants of the earth.

and hallowed it; because that in it He rested from all His work which God in creating had made.

2. THE TESTING OF ABRAHAM

(Genesis 22 1-19)

FOR the historic and religious significance of the story see page 31.

From the literary point of view this story, known as the Akedah *or "Sacrifice," is an excellent example of the swift-moving, dramatic narrative characteristic of the Bible.*

AND it came to pass after these things, that God did prove Abraham, and said unto him: "Abraham"; and he said "Here am I." And He said: "Take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest, even Isaac, and get thee into the land of Moriah;[7] and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of."

And Abraham rose early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he cleaved the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. And Abraham said unto his young men: "Abide ye here with the ass, and I and the lad will go yonder; and we will worship, and come back to you."

And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took in his hand the fire[8] and the knife; and they went both of them together. And Isaac spoke unto Abraham his father, and said: "My father." And he said: "Here am I, my son." And he said: "Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" And Abraham said: "God will provide Himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." So they went both of them together.

[7] The exact location of Moriah is uncertain. Tradition identifies it with the hill in Jerusalem on which Solomon built the Temple.

[8] Striking fire was undoubtedly a difficult process, so Abraham takes along some live embers.

And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built the altar there, and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said: "Abraham, Abraham." And he said: "Here am I." And he said: "Lay not thy hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him; for now I know that thou art a God-fearing man, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from Me."

And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place Adonai-jireh;[9] as it is said to this day: "In the mount where the LORD is seen." And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham a second time out of heaven, and said: "By Myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast hearkened to My voice."

So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beer-sheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beer-sheba.

[9] *Adonai,* the "LORD;" *jireh,* "seeth."

3. ELIEZER AND REBEKAH

(GENESIS 24)

IT IS doubtful if elsewhere in the Bible, or in any other source, may be found so vivid and faithful a picture of the life of the Orient as is contained in this account of the journey from Palestine to Mesopotamia of Abraham's servant who is presumed to be his steward Eliezer, although he is not, in this story, mentioned by name. The narrative is highly tinged with what is called "local color": the hand under the thigh in taking an oath, the pitcher of water which Rebekah "let down" from her shoulder "upon her hand"; the idyllic scene at the well; the water for the men to wash their feet; etc., etc. It is needless to say, however, that the author of this narrative made no conscious use of artistic literary devices. The result is all the more a perfect work of art. One need not have been in the East to feel the charm of, for example, the following sentence: "And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide; and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, there were camels coming."

AND Abraham was old, well stricken in age; and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things.

And Abraham said unto his servant, the elder of his house, that ruled over all that he had; "Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh. And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife for my son of the daughters of the Canaanite, among whom I dwell. But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son, even for Isaac."

And the servant said unto him: "Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land; must I needs bring thy son back unto the land from whence thou camest?" And Abraham said unto him: "Beware thou that thou bring not my son back thither. The LORD, the God of heaven, who took me from my father's house, and from the land of my nativity, and who spoke unto me, and who swore unto me, saying: Unto thy seed will I give this land; He will send His angel before thee,

and thou shalt take a wife for my son from thence. And if the woman be not willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath; only thou shalt not bring my son back thither."

And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning this matter.

And the servant took ten camels, of the camels of his master, and departed; having all goodly things of his master's in his hand; and he arose, and went to Aram-naharaim,[10] unto the city of Nahor.[11] And he made the camels to kneel down[12] without the city by the well of water at the time of evening, the time that women go out to draw water. And he said: "O LORD, the God of my master Abraham, send me, I pray Thee, good speed this day, and show kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold, I stand by the fountain of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water. So let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say: Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say: Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also; let the same be she that Thou hast appointed for Thy servant, even for Isaac; and thereby shall I know that Thou hast shown kindness unto my master."

And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel the son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder. And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her; and she went down to the fountain, and filled her pitcher, and came up.

And the servant ran to meet her, and said: "Give me to drink, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher." And she said: "Drink, my lord"; and she hastened, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink. And when she had done giving him drink, she said: "I will draw for thy camels also, until they have done drinking." And she hastened, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw,

[10] Literally, "Aram of the two rivers," the rivers being the Euphrates and the Tigris. The Greek name, Mesopotamia, means "the district between the rivers."

[11] Nahor is Abraham's brother who had stayed in Mesopotamia in the city of Haran.

[12] Camels "kneel down" when they rest.

and drew for all his camels. And the man looked stedfastly on her; holding his peace, to know whether the LORD had made his journey prosperous or not.

And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden ring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold; and said: "Whose daughter art thou? tell me, I pray thee. Is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in?" And she said unto him: "I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, whom she bore unto Nahor." She said moreover unto him: "We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in."

And the man bowed his head, and prostrated himself before the LORD. And he said: "Blessed be the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who hath not forsaken His mercy and His truth toward my master; as for me, the LORD hath led me in the way to the house of my master's brethren."

And the damsel ran, and told her mother's house according to these words. And Rebekah had a brother, and his name was Laban; and Laban ran out unto the man, unto the fountain. And it came to pass, when he saw the ring, and the bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying: "Thus spoke the man unto me," that he came unto the man;[13] and, behold, he stood by the camels at the fountain. And he said: "Come in, thou blessed of the LORD; wherefore standest thou without? for I have cleared the house, and made room for the camels."

And the man came into the house, and he ungirded the camels; and he gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet and the feet of the men that were with him. And there was set food before him to eat; but he said: "I will not eat, until I have told mine errand." And he said: "Speak on."

And he said: "I am Abraham's servant.[14] And the LORD hath

[13] Laban's predominant quality is greed. What attracts him is the jewelry his sister has received.

[14] "Laban has not asked his visitor's name and now for the first time learns who he is. This is according to Arab etiquette. The host does not ask his guest's name, at any rate till the latter has eaten of his food, lest there should prove to be a blood feud between them or their tribes. After the guest has eaten with his host he is safe"—*New-Century Bible.*

blessed my master greatly; and he is become great; and He hath given him flocks and herds, and silver and gold, and men servants and maid servants, and camels and asses. And Sarah my master's wife bore a son to my master when she was old; and unto him hath he given all that he hath.

"And my master made me swear, saying: Thou shalt not take a wife for my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell. But thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son. And I said unto my master: Peradventure the woman will not follow me. And he said unto me: The LORD, before whom I walk, will send His angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house; then shalt thou be clear from my oath, when thou comest to my kindred; and if they give her not to thee, thou shalt be clear from my oath.

"And I came this day unto the fountain, and said: O LORD, the God of my master Abraham, if now Thou do prosper my way which I go: behold, I stand by the fountain of water; and let it come to pass, that the maiden that cometh forth to draw, to whom I shall say: Give me, I pray thee, a little water from thy pitcher to drink; and she shall say to me: Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels; let the same be the woman whom the LORD hath appointed for my master's son.

"And before I had done speaking to my heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down unto the fountain, and drew. And I said unto her: Let me drink, I pray thee. And she made haste, and let down her pitcher from her shoulder, and said: Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also. So I drank, and she made the camels drink also. And I asked her, and said: Whose daughter art thou? And she said: The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bore unto him. And I put the ring upon her nose, and the bracelets upon her hands.

"And I bowed my head, and prostrated myself before the LORD, and blessed the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter for his son. And now if ye will deal kindly and truly

with my master, tell me; and if not, tell me; that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left." [15]

Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said: "The thing proceedeth from the LORD; we cannot speak unto thee bad or good. Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the LORD hath spoken."

And it came to pass, that, when Abraham's servant heard their words, he bowed himself down to the earth unto the LORD. And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave them to Rebekah; he gave also to her brother and to her mother precious things. And they did eat and drink, he and the men that were with him, and tarried all night; and they rose up in the morning, and he said: "Send me away unto my master." And her brother and her mother said: "Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at the least ten; after that she shall go." And he said unto them: "Delay me not, seeing the LORD hath prospered my way; send me away that I may go to my master." And they said: "We will call the damsel, and inquire at her mouth." And they called Rebekah, and said unto her: "Wilt thou go with this man?" And she said: "I will go."

And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham's servant, and his men. And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her: "Our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and let thy seed possess the gate of those that hate them." [16]

And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man. And the servant took Rebekah, and went his way.

And Isaac came from the way of Beer-lahai-roi; [17] for he dwelt in the land of the South. And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide; and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, there were camels coming. And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she alighted from the camel.

[15] *i.e.*, that I may know what to do.

[16] To possess the gate of one's enemy is, of course, to be master of his city.

[17] The name means, "the well of him what liveth and seeth me."

And she said unto the servant: "What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us?" And the servant said: "It is my master." And she took her veil, and covered herself.[18]

And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done. And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her. And Isaac was comforted for his mother.[19]

4. JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS

(GENESIS 37 3-36; 42–45)

FOR an appraisal of this profoundly moving story, reread page 44 and 45.

NOW Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age; and he made him a coat of many colors. And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.

JOSEPH DREAMS DREAMS

And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it to his brethren; and they hated him yet the more. And he said unto them: "Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: for, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves came round about, and bowed down to my sheaf." And his brethren said to him: "Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us?" And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words.

And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it to his brethren, and said: "Behold, I have dreamed yet a dream: and, behold, the sun and the moon and eleven stars bowed down to me." And he told it to his father, and to his brethren; and his father rebuked him, and said unto him: "What is this dream that thou

[18] It is still the custom in the East for women to veil their features for all men except their husbands.

[19] His mother, Sarah, was now dead.

hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down to thee to the earth?" And his brethren envied him; but his father kept the saying in mind.

HE GOES OUT TO SEEK HIS BROTHERS

And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. And Israel said unto Joseph: "Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? come, and I will send thee unto them." And he said to him: "Here am I." And he said to him: "Go now, see whether it is well with thy brethren, and well with the flock; and bring me back word."

So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem. And a certain man found him, and, behold, he was wandering in the field. And the man asked him, saying: "What seekest thou?" And he said: "I seek my brethren. Tell me, I pray thee, where they are feeding the flock." And the man said: "Thy are departed hence; for I heard them say: Let us go to Dothan." [20] And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan.

THEY CONSPIRE AGAINST HIM

And they saw him afar off, and before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him. And they said one to another: "Behold, this dreamer cometh. Come now, therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into one of the pits, and we will say: An evil beast hath devoured him; and we shall see what will become of his dreams."

And Reuben heard it, and delivered him out of their hand; and said: "Let us not take his life." And Reuben said unto them: "Shed no blood; cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, but lay no hand upon him"— that he might deliver him out of their hand, to restore him to his father.

And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph of his coat, the coat of many colors that was on him; and they took him, and cast him into the pit — and the pit was empty, there was no water in it.

[20] There is a hill north of Shechem still called Dothan.

THEY SELL HIM INTO EGYPT

And they sat down to eat bread; and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a caravan of Ishmaelites came from Gilead, with their camels bearing spicery[21] and balm[21] and ladanum,[21] going to carry it down to Egypt.

And Judah said unto his brethren: "What profit is it if we slay our brother and conceal his blood? Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother, our flesh." And his brethren hearkened unto him.

And there passed by Midianites,[22] merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. And they brought Joseph into Egypt.

JACOB, DECEIVED, MOURNS FOR HIM AS DEAD

And Reuben returned unto the pit; and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit; and he rent his clothes And he returned unto his brethren, and said: "The child is not; and as for me, whither shall I go?"

And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a he-goat, and dipped the coat in the blood; and they sent the coat of many colors, and they brought it to their father; and said: "This have we found. Know now whether it is thy son's coat or not."

And he knew it, and said: "It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt torn in pieces." And Jacob rent his garments, and put sackcloth[23] upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said: "Nay, but I will go down to the grave to my son mourning." And his father wept for him.

And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, the captain of the guard.

Joseph is falsely accused by the wife of Potiphar and cast into prison. But owing to his remarkable ability to in-

[21] All of these products are resinous gums from different trees and shrubs growing in Gilead, the land east of the Jordan.

[22] Midian is a country between Egypt and Palestine.

[23] To dress in sackcloth is, of course, a sign of mourning.

terpret dreams, he is finally introduced to the Pharaoh who has had strange dreams in which seven fat cows were devoured by seven lean ones, and seven good ears of corn were swallowed up by seven withered ones. Joseph interprets the dreams to mean that Egypt would have seven years of plenty and then be visited by seven years of famine. Pharaoh appoints Joseph food dictator of Egypt to prepare against the famine. "And the famine was over all the face of the earth . . . And all the countries came into Egypt to Joseph to buy corn."

Now Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, and Jacob said unto his sons: "Why do ye look one upon another?"[24] And he said: "Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt. Get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die."

JACOB'S SONS GO DOWN TO EGYPT FOR CORN

And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn from Egypt. But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with his brethren; for he said: "Lest peradventure harm befall him." And the sons of Israel came to buy among those that came; for the famine was in the land of Canaan.

And Joseph was the governor over the land; he it was that sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down to him with their faces to the earth. And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spoke roughly with them; and he said unto them: "Whence come ye?" And they said: "From the land of Canaan to buy food." And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him.[25]

And Joseph remembered the dreams, which he dreamed of them and said unto them: "Ye are spies; to see the nakedness[26] of the land ye are come." And they said unto him: "Nay, my

[24] *i.e.*, why don't you do something?

[25] Joseph is no longer the youth whom they had sold to the Ishmaelites. He is now a man, and a great and powerful ruler, and his brothers fail to recognize him.

[26] The nomads on Egypt's borders made frequent raids on the outlying provinces. "Nakedness" here means "defenselessness."

lord, but to buy food are thy servants come. We are all one man's sons; we are upright men, thy servants are no spies." And he said unto them: "Nay, but to see the nakedness of the land ye are come." And they said: "We thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not."

JOSEPH SCHEMES TO MAKE THEM BRING BENJAMIN

And Joseph said unto them: "That is it that I spoke unto you, saying: Ye are spies. Hereby ye shall be proved: as Pharaoh liveth,[27] ye shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither. Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and ye shall be bound,[28] that your words may be proved, whether there be truth in you; or else, as Pharaoh liveth, surely ye are spies." And he put them all together into ward three days.

And Joseph said unto them the third day: "This do, and live; for I fear God: if ye be upright men, let one of your brethren be bound in your prison house; but go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses; and bring your youngest brother unto me; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die." And they did so.

And they said one to another: "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us." And Reuben answered them, saying: "Spoke I not unto you, saying: Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore also, behold, his blood is required."[29] And they knew not that Joseph understood them; for the interpreter was between them.[30]

HE HOLDS SIMEON FOR A HOSTAGE

And he turned himself about from them, and wept; and he returned to them, and spoke to them, and took Simeon from among them, and bound him before their eyes. Then Joseph commanded

[27] The form of oath in Egypt. The Pharaoh was worshiped and sworn by as a god.

[28] Imprisoned.

[29] *i.e., avenged;* required at the hands of the guilty.

[30] Joseph, of course, had spoken to them through an interpreter.

to fill their vessels with corn, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and to give them provision for the way; and thus was it done unto them. And they laded their asses with their corn, and departed thence.

And as one of them opened his sack to give his ass provender in the lodging place, he espied his money; and, behold, it was in the mouth of his sack. And he said unto his brethren: "My money is restored; and, lo, it is even in my sack." And their hearts failed them, and they turned trembling one to another, saying: "What is this that God hath done unto us?"

And they came unto Jacob their father unto the land of Canaan, and told him all that had befallen them, saying: "The man, the lord of the land, spoke roughly with us, and took us for spies of the country. And we said unto him: We are upright men; we are no spies. We are twelve brethren, sons of our father; one is not, and the youngest is this day with our father in the land of Canaan. And the man, the lord of the land, said unto us: Hereby shall I know that ye are upright men: leave one of your brethren with me, and take corn for the famine of your houses, and go your way. And bring your youngest brother unto me; then shall I know that ye are no spies, but that ye are upright men; so will I deliver you your brother, and ye shall traffic in the land."

And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks, that, behold, every man's bundle of money was in his sack; and when they and their father saw their bundles of money, they were afraid.

JACOB FEARS TO LET BENJAMIN GO

And Jacob their father said unto them: "Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away; upon me are all these things come."

And Reuben spoke unto his father, saying: "Thou shalt slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee; deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him back to thee." And he said: "My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he only is left; if harm befall him by the way in which ye go, then will ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave."

JACOB'S FOOD GIVES OUT

And the famine was sore in the land. And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the corn which they had brought out of Egypt, that their father said unto them: "Go again, buy us a little food."

And Judah spoke unto him, saying: "The man did earnestly forewarn us, saying: Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you. If thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food; but if thou wilt not send him, we will not go down, for the man said unto us: Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you."

And Israel said: "Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me, as to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother?" And they said: "The man asked straitly concerning ourselves, and concerning our kindred, saying: Is your father yet alive? have ye another brother? and we told him according to the tenor of these words; could we in any wise know that he would say: Bring your brother down?"

And Judah said unto Israel his father: "Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones. I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him; if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever. For except we had lingered, surely we had now returned a second time."

HE IS FORCED TO LET BENJAMIN GO

And their father Israel said unto them: "If it be so now, do this: take of the choice fruits of the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spicery and ladanum, nuts, and almonds; and take double money in your hand; and the money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks carry back in your hand; peradventure it was an oversight; take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man; and God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may release unto you your other brother and Benjamin. And as for me, if I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."

And the men took that present, and they took double money

in their hand, and Benjamin; and rose up, and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph.

JOSEPH PREPARES A FEAST FOR HIS BROTHERS

And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house: "Bring the men into the house, and kill the beasts, and prepare the meat; for the men shall dine with me at noon."

And the man did as Joseph bade; and the man brought the men into Joseph's house.

And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said: "Because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time are we brought in; that he may seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses."

And they came near to the steward of Joseph's house, and they spoke unto him at the door of the house, and said: "Oh my lord, we came indeed down at the first time to buy food. And it came to pass, when we came to the lodging place, that we opened our sacks, and, behold, every man's money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight; and we have brought it back in our hand. And other money have we brought down in our hand to buy food. We know not who put our money in our sacks."

HIS STEWARD REASSURES THEM

And he said: "Peace be to you, fear not; your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks; I had your money." And he brought Simeon out unto them.

And the man brought the men into Joseph's house, and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their asses provender. And they made ready the present against Joseph's coming at noon; for they heard that they should eat bread there. And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which was in their hand into the house, and bowed down to him to the earth.

And he asked them of their welfare, and said: "Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spoke? Is he yet alive?" And

they said: "Thy servant our father is well, he is yet alive." And they bowed the head, and made obeisance.

JOSEPH SEES HIS BROTHER BENJAMIN

And he lifted up his eyes, and saw Benjamin his brother, his mother's son, and said: "Is this your youngest brother of whom ye spoke unto me?" And he said: "God be gracious unto thee, my son."

And Joseph made haste; for his heart yearned toward his brother; and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there. And he washed his face, and came out; and he refrained himself, and said: "Set on bread."

HE FEASTS WITH HIS BROTHERS

And they set on for him by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians, that did eat with him, by themselves; because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination unto the Egyptians.[31] And they sat before him, the first-born according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth; and the men marveled one with another.[32] And portions were taken unto them from before him; but Benjamin's portion was five times so much[33] as any of theirs.

And they drank, and were merry with him.

JOSEPH SCHEMES TO RETAIN BENJAMIN

And he commanded the steward of his house, saying: "Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his sack's mouth. And put my goblet, the silver goblet, in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his corn money." And he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken.

As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away,

[31] The Egyptians, it seems, had dietary laws which forbade them to eat with foreigners.

[32] Joseph had them seated according to their ages, and the brothers were surprised that he knew their ages so accurately.

[33] Joseph gave Benjamin "five times so much" not because he expected him to eat it, but as a mark of special honor.

they and their asses. And when they were gone out of the city, and were not yet far off, Joseph said unto his steward: "Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them: Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good? Is not this it in which my lord drinketh, and whereby he indeed divineth?[34] ye have done evil in so doing." And he overtook them, and he spoke unto them these words.

And they said unto him: "Wherefore speaketh my lord such words as these? Far be it from thy servants that they should do such a thing. Behold, the money, which we found in our sacks' mouth, we brought back unto thee out of the land of Canaan; how then should we steal out of thy lord's house silver or gold? With whomsoever of thy servants it be found, let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondmen."

And he said: "Now also let it be according unto your words: he with whom it is found shall be my bondman; and ye shall be blameless."

THE CUP IS FOUND IN BENJAMIN'S SACK

Then they hastened, and took down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack. And he searched, beginning at the eldest, and leaving off at the youngest; and the goblet was found in Benjamin's sack. Then they rent their clothes,[35] and laded every man his ass, and returned to the city.

And Judah and his brethren came to Joseph's house, and he was yet there; and they fell before him on the ground. And Joseph said unto them: "What deed is this that ye have done? know ye not that such a man as I will indeed divine?" And Judah said: "What shall we say unto my lord? What shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants; behold, we are my lord's bondmen, both we, and he also in whose hand the cup is found." And he said: "Far be it from me that I should do so; the man in whose

[34] "Divination, foretelling the future by means of a cup, was a branch of ancient magic, and consisted in throwing fragments of gold and silver into a cup, and drawing conclusions from the arrangement into which they fell." —*New-Century Bible.*

[35] Rending the clothes (in Hebrew *Kree-ah*) is still practiced by Jews as a sign of great grief.

hand the goblet is found, he shall be my bondman; but as for you, get you up in peace unto your father."

JUDAH PLEADS WITH JOSEPH

Then Judah came near unto him, and said: "Oh my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant; for thou art even as Pharaoh. My lord asked his servants, saying: Have ye a father, or a brother? And we said unto my lord: We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and his brother is dead,[36] and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him. And thou saidst unto thy servants: Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him. And we said unto my lord: The lad cannot leave his father; for if he should leave his father, his father would die. And thou saidst unto thy servants: Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more.

"And it came to pass when we came up unto thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord. And our father said: Go again, buy us a little food. And we said: We cannot go down; if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down; for we may not see the man's face, except our youngest brother be with us. And thy servant my father said unto us: Ye know that my wife bore me two sons; and the one went out from me, and I said: Surely he is torn in pieces; and I have not seen him since; and if ye take this one also from me, and harm befall him, ye will bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

"Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad is not with us; seeing that his soul is bound up with the lad's soul; it will come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die; and thy servants will bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave. For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying: If I bring him not unto thee, then shall I bear the blame to my father for ever. Now therefore, let thy servant, I pray thee, abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord;

[36] Not having heard of him so many years, Judah took it for granted that Joseph was dead.

and let the lad go up with his brethren. For how shall I go up to my father, if the lad be not with me? lest I look upon the evil that shall come on my father."

JOSEPH REVEALS HIMSELF TO HIS BROTHERS

Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried: "Cause every man to go out from me." And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren.

And he wept aloud; and the Egyptians heard, and the house of Pharaoh heard. And Joseph said unto his brethren: "I am Joseph; doth my father yet live?" And his brethren could not answer him; for they were affrighted at his presence.

And Joseph said unto his brethren: "Come near to me, I pray you." And they came near. And he said: "I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. And now be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve life. For these two years hath the famine been in the land; and there are yet five years, in which there shall be neither plowing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to give you a remnant on the earth,[37] and to save you alive for a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God; and He hath made me a father[38] to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and ruler over all the land of Egypt.

HE SENDS THEM TO BRING THEIR FATHER

"Hasten ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him: Thus saith thy son Joseph: God hath made me lord of all Egypt; come down unto me, tarry not. And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen,[39] and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast; and there will I sustain thee; for there are yet five years of famine; lest thou come to poverty, thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast. And, behold,

[37] *i.e.*, to enable you to remain on the earth.

[38] *i.e.*, a counselor or minister to Pharaoh.

[39] The region east of the Nile Delta (see map p. 76).

your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you. And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall hasten and bring down my father hither."

And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck. And he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them; and after that his brethren talked with him.

And the report thereof was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying: "Joseph's brethren are come"; and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph: "Say unto thy brethren: This do ye: lade your beasts, and go, get you unto the land of Canaan; and take your father and your households, and come unto me. And I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat the fat of the land. Now thou art commanded, this do ye: take you wagons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father, and come. Also regard not your stuff;[40] for the good things of all the land of Egypt are yours."

And the sons of Israel did so; and Joseph gave them wagons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh, and gave them provision for the way. To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred shekels of silver, and five changes of raiment. And to his father he sent in like manner ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt,[41] and ten she-asses laden with corn and bread and victual for his father by the way.

So he sent his brethren away, and they departed; and he said unto them: " See that ye fall not out by the way." [42]

THE SPIRIT OF JACOB IS REVIVED

And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father. And they told him, saying: "Joseph is yet alive, and he is ruler over all the land of Egypt."

[40] *i.e.*, do not trouble yourselves about your household goods.

[41] The "good things of Egypt" which Joseph sent his father were, no doubt, such articles as jewels, clothing, things made of ivory, etc.

[42] A sarcastic "dig" at their quarrelsomeness.

And his heart fainted, for he believed them not. And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them; and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived. And Israel said: "It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive; I will go and see him before I die."

TOPIC TWO
The Bondage of Egypt

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The Bondage of Egypt

§ 1. *Egypt Is Like a Green Snake Curling Through the Yellow Desert.*

§ 2. *From Its Tombs and Temples, from Its Art and Writing, We Glean the Story of the Gorgeous Civilization of Ancient Egypt.*

§ 3. *A New Pharaoh, in the Age of the Empire, Makes Slaves of the Hebrews Sojourning in Egypt.*

§ 4. *A Great Leader, Moses the Liberator, Rises Up and Leads Them Forth from the "House of Bondage."*

TOPIC TWO: LITERATURE

1. The Birth and Early Manhood of Moses (*Exodus* 2^{1-22}).
2. The Burning Bush (*Exodus* 3^{1-20}).
3. The Song of Deliverance (*Exodus* 15^{1-18}).

TOPIC TWO

The Bondage of Egypt

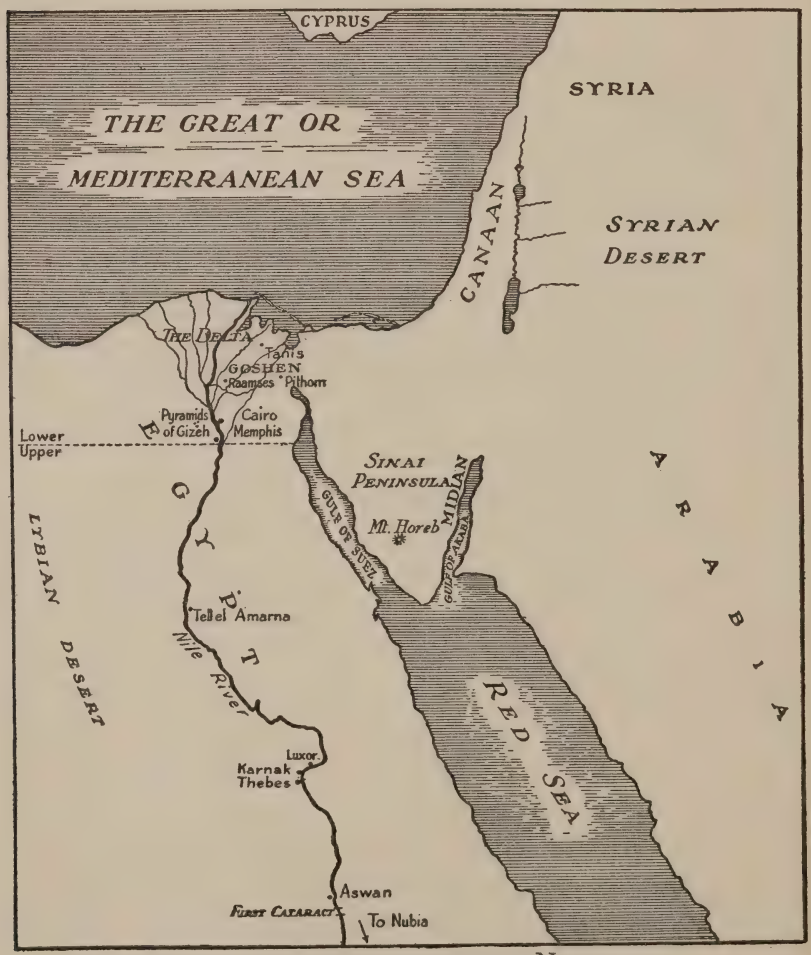
§ 1. *Egypt Is Like a Green Snake Curling through the Yellow Desert.*

ISSUING from Lake Victoria and the marshes of Sudan, and fed by tributaries that rush down from the highlands of Abyssinia, the River Nile cuts its way through Egypt in a flow of nearly thirty-five hundred miles to the Mediterranean Sea. When it reaches the modern city of Cairo, it stretches out many arms in the shape of a fan and forms the fertile Delta, the best grassland in the country. On the eastern edge of this fan lay the Land of Goshen, where the children of Israel, because of the love the Pharaoh bore to Joseph, were permitted to graze their flocks.

If the region above the Syrian Desert, with Babylonia at one end and Canaan at the other, may be described as a "fertile crescent," Egypt is no more than a "fertile ribbon." For on both sides of the narrow Nile valley rise the gray and tawny cliffs of the desert, reaching at times a height of a thousand feet and stretching east to the Red Sea and west clear across the African continent. For more than three thousand miles from its headwaters, the river cuts a narrow gorge through hard rock and forms a chain of six cataracts, of which the first is located near the modern Aswan. This narrow gorge offers but little foothold for cultivation. North of Aswan, however, the valley widens. Varying in

width from two to thirty miles, it has a line of alluvial soil on either side of the river.

No soil in the world is more fertile than this narrow valley of the Nile. It is literally the gift of the river. For every summer the river overflows its banks, and, when it returns to its channel, it has left a thin layer of mud which its waters have carried from the Abyssinian



EGYPT AND HER IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORS

uplands. The accumulation of layers over many thousands of years has resulted in the "fertile ribbon." In the same way, the Delta also, which makes up the bulk of the fertile land of Egypt, consists of earth brought by the river from its mountain sources and deposited at its mouth in the course of the ages. With the Delta as the head, Egypt may be compared to a huge green snake stretched out on the yellow desert.

The total area of the fertile soil, including the Delta, is not more than about ten thousand square miles. But on this small area there developed, as we shall see, a remarkably rich civilization, the foundations of which, soil and water, were furnished by the Nile. The climate was another great aid. Upper Egypt lies partly in the tropics, while most of the country is sub-tropical. The days are very hot and the nights cool. But the entire valley south of the Delta has practically no rain the whole year round. The air, therefore, is dry and crisp and, what with the cool north wind, the Etesian, which blows practically throughout the year, the weather is balmy and invigorating, making it possible for man and beast to work hard and steadily.

The absence of rain makes irrigation a prime necessity. Men lift the water from the Nile to the upper fields by bucket and lever pole through a rising series of basins, and send it flowing through the irrigation ditches. This work never stops, for on it hangs the life of those who inhabit the valley. The men who could gain control of the irrigation works could make themselves the masters. Babylonia and Egypt, then, were alike in this respect that their civilization depended on the constant care and operation of their irrigation systems.

Thousands of years before the arrival of the children

of Israel, the career of Egyptian civilization had begun. At the time of their arrival this civilization was at its zenith. It was the Egypt of the Eighteenth Dynasty, a vast Empire stretching from Nubia in the south to Mesopotamia in the north. The Pharaoh's armies, recruited from different nations, were the dread of the earth. The Pharaoh's palaces, temples and monuments were more magnificent than any buildings on earth. His sculptors and painters, his architects and engineers, his astronomers, philosophers and magicians, were wiser and more skillful than any others.

What were the stages by which this power and splendor arose, the second great civilization after Babylonia with which the Hebrews came into contact?

§ 2. *From Its Tombs and Temples, from Its Art and Writing, We Glean the Story of the Gorgeous Civilization of Ancient Egypt.*

THE geography of Egypt provided that land with another great advantage of which we must take note before we enter upon a review of her story. Egypt was comparatively secure against invasions. In the case of Babylonia, we saw how her position inevitably made her the bone of contention and battle-ground between the mountain men of the north and east and the nomads of the south and west. Egypt, however, was protected on the east and west by the desert; on the south she had little to fear from the primitive men of the African jungles; so that only in the north, by way of the Isthmus of Suez or the north African coastland was it possible for an invader to reach her. This comparative security enabled Egypt to enjoy a more or less unbroken development.

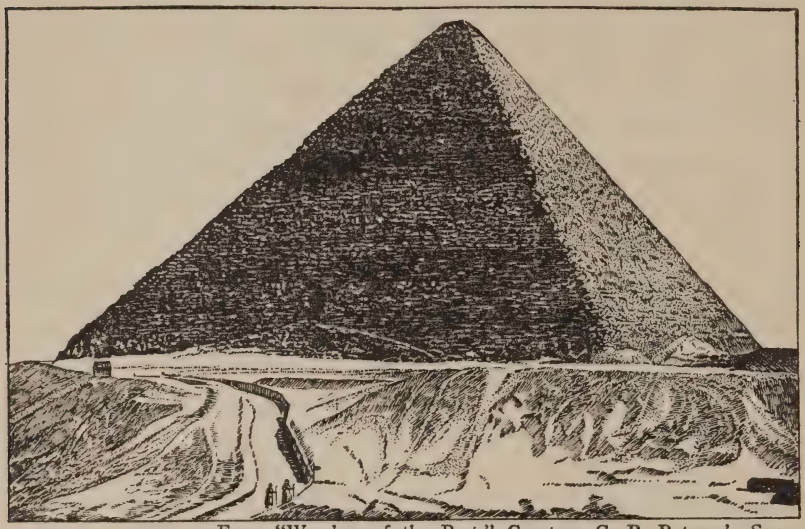
As early as 4000 B.C.E., about the time the Sumerians were taking possession of the Plain of Shinar, the Nile valley, it is believed, was dotted with city kingdoms. The kingdoms fought among themselves, forming larger and larger units, until there emerged the kingdom of the Delta or Lower Egypt in the north and that of the Nile valley or Upper Egypt in the south. It was the period of the Late Stone Age when men still made their tools and weapons from flint. But copper had already been discovered, probably somewhere in the Sinai Peninsula, and men were already learning to fashion their tools out of metal. The two kingdoms continued the struggle until about the year 3400 B.C.E., when they were united by King Menes, the founder of the first Egyptian dynasty. For the first time a numerous population, scattered over a large area, was governed by a single ruler.

a. The Age of the Old Kingdom or Pyramid Age

For the next several centuries, the Egyptians gathered their inner strength. They perfected their system of administration of which writing was an essential part, and developed handicrafts and arts. They learned also how to build with huge blocks of stone instead of sun-baked bricks. Then, about the year 3000 B.C.E., the civilization of Egypt burst into bloom, and left monuments of a size and splendor that still inspire men with wonder and admiration. The Age of the Pyramids had begun.

This age lasted about five centuries, and its greatness is proclaimed by those stupendous piles of stone masonry standing at Gizeh on the edge of the Lybian desert near modern Cairo. Each one of those pyramids is a tomb in the heart of which was laid away the carefully em-

balmed body of a king. The largest of them, the Great Pyramid, is the tomb of King Khufu or Cheops. It covers an area of thirteen acres and rises to a height of nearly five hundred feet. Its construction required the

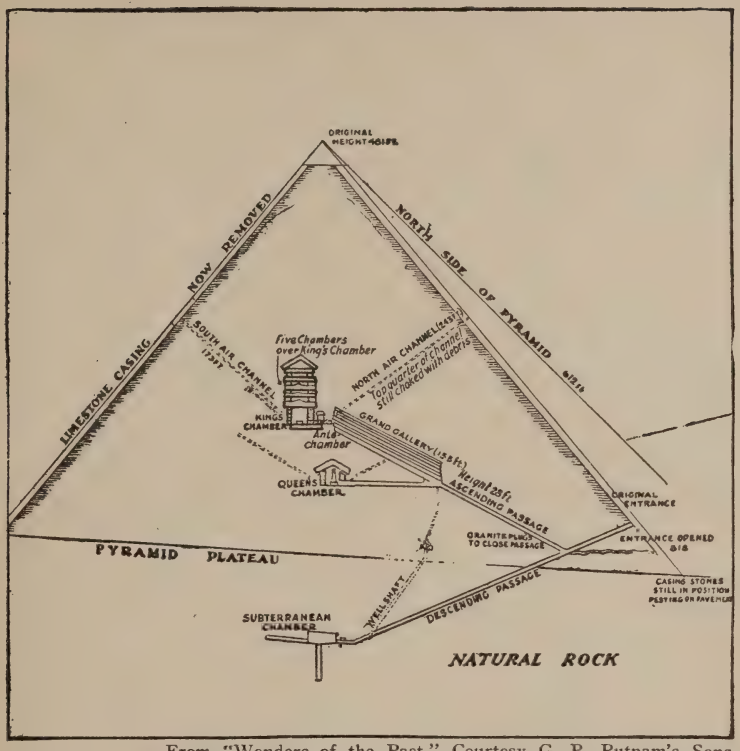


From "Wonders of the Past," Courtesy G. P. Putnam's Sons.

THE COLOSSAL PYRAMID OF KHUFU

This is known as the Great Pyramid and it served as the tomb of King Khufu (in Greek, *Cheops*). Originally the stone surface of this pyramid was covered with a fine casing of marble slabs, but these slabs have long been removed and used in the construction of other buildings.

labor of one hundred thousand men for twenty years. Second in size is the pyramid of King Khafre or Chephren, before which stands the Great Sphinx, a colossal head of the king with the body of a lion. Before each pyramid there was a beautiful temple open to the sky, its walls covered with bright colored carvings and inscriptions; and grouped around the pyramid were the tombs of the king's ministers and nobles of the realm. All of this vast cemetery stood on a plateau of the desert, and, below it, near the river, rose the royal city of Memphis, dominated by the king's palace, and containing the mag-



From "Wonders of the Past," Courtesy G. P. Putnam's Sons.

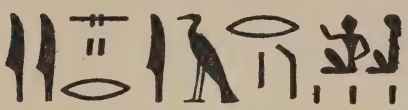
CROSS SECTION OF THE PYRAMID OF KHUFU

The entrance to this pyramid was not opened until 818 C.E. It was walled up to prevent robbers from rifling the treasures that were buried with the king.

nificent villas and gardens of his ministers and officers who collected his taxes, commanded his armies and administered his kingdom.

The royal city has vanished, but the carved figures and inscriptions on the tombs remain to give us a vivid picture of the complex and elegant civilization which, nearly five thousand years ago, flourished in the valley of the Nile. Egyptian writing followed independently the same general line of development as the cuneiform script of the Sumerians (see p. 21). It began with

picture signs which, in time, ceased to be connected with the objects they originally stood for. Each sign then became a phonetic symbol: it stood for a sound only. And, just as in the case of the cuneiform system, the sound each sign represented was not a single alphabetic sound, like our *b* or *s,* but a whole syllable. Thus, to take an illustration based on English, the *word* "tree" would be the picture of a tree. In time, however, this symbol would stand for the syllable "tree," and, together with other symbols, would be used to write any word, like "treason," "tremendous," etc., in which that syllable occurred. The Egyptians, it is true, developed also a twenty-four letter alphabet, in which, as in our own, each sign stood for a single sound; but they made very little use of it. They clung to their ancient system of about six hundred syllable signs. Having been used originally by their priests only, it has been named *hieroglyphics,* a Greek word meaning "sacred carving."



THE WORD "ISRAEL" IN HIEROGLYPHICS

(See Illustration p. 100)

A much better writing material than clay tablets was produced in Egypt. Out of the reeds that grew on the banks of the Nile, called papyrus, the Egyptians worked out tough, thin, fibrous sheets very much like our own paper. (Our word paper is derived from *papyrus.*) A good ink was produced out of soot, water and vegetable gum, and a pointed reed made a pen. Thus the Egyptians perfected a practical system and technique of writing, one of the most important tools of civilization.

The carved hieroglyphic inscriptions on the walls of the tombs, and the elegant pictures in relief, from which the paint has only partly faded, reveal the Egyptian's

daily life and occupations. They show us how he farmed the soil, raising wheat, barley and vegetables; cared for his cattle and fowl; made his pottery, glassware, furniture, jewelry and other articles of use and luxury. They show us the graceful ships on which he sailed up and down the Nile and along the coasts of the Mediterranean and Red Seas, bringing copper from the mines on the

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN FARMERS AT WORK

In the top scene, left, the farmers are shown plowing and sowing. At the right they are cutting the grain and binding it into sheaves. The bottom scene, left, shows them threshing; and at the right they are reaping, binding and stacking.

Sinai Peninsula, cedar wood from the Lebanon, or transporting huge obelisks and blocks of limestone for the pyramid tombs of kings and nobles. They show us how the lords and officials of the kings took their ease in their sumptuous gardens and palaces, and how their slaves toiled in the fields and workshops or carried them on their shoulders in magnificent sedans.

Besides the slaves, there was a class of free merchants and artisans in Egypt, but only the king and his nobles owned the land. The social system resembled in some respects the feudalism of the Middle Ages in Europe. The farmers were nearly all serfs or slaves, getting little mercy from the brutal tax collectors who are shown carrying a club as part of their professional equipment. In addition, the people were drafted to labor on

the huge buildings and tombs of the monarchs, and the whip of the taskmaster fell often on their naked shoulders.

The king's title, Pharaoh, the equivalent of the Egyptian *par-o,* meant the "Great House" or palace. The awe in which the monarch was held led the Egyptian to speak of the dwelling rather than its occupant. For the Pharaoh was not only a king but a god whom the Egyptians worshiped in addition to all their other gods.

But while the Egyptians were busily occupied with the affairs of life, they were intensely preoccupied with thoughts of death, and life after death. No people have lavished so much care and labor on their dead, their most magnificent structures being their tombs. Of course, they believed in life after death, but such life they thought possible only in the body. Accordingly, they perfected the art of embalming by which they hoped to preserve the body indefinitely. The fine state of preservation in which their mummies have been discovered proves how well founded this hope was. It is interesting to observe that Joseph the Hebrew, having lived long enough in Egypt to assimilate some of their customs, "commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father," and that his own body was also embalmed. The deceased, the Egyptians believed, would continue his former habits and occupations. Accordingly, they furnished his tomb with all things that had served him during life. In the chapel or temple adjoining the pyramid, his food was left for him, and there he was believed to repair to worship the gods.

HATHOR

An important goddess, originally of the sky, pictured with the horns of a cow.

The religion of ancient Egypt recognized a bewildering number and variety of gods. Most of them were city or tribal deities, although some of the latter, like Amon, the god of Thebes, rose afterwards to national importance and to supremacy in the Egyptian pantheon. He was pictured with the horns of a ram, just as Hathor or Isis, the goddess of the moon, was pictured with those of a cow. There were other Egyptian gods who were represented in the form of animals—cats, crocodiles, lizards, ibises, snakes, beetles and others. This manner of symbolizing the gods led, in time, to the worship of the animals themselves. All Egypt worshiped Re,* the god of the sun, who was pictured as a falcon winging his way across the heavens. Equally popular, and lasting much longer, was the worship of Osiris, god of life and immortality, who, according to legend, had died and was resurrected. In these legends, Isis figures as his wife and as the mother of the infant god Horus.

SEKHMET, GODDESS OF WAR
Represented with the head of a lioness.

The Egyptians had numerous other gods and goddesses, as well as demons, and in every town the most impressive building was the temple where the worship was conducted by the priests, with solemn ceremonies and sacrifices of oxen and geese.

* Pronounced *Ray*.

The priests made up a special social class, so rich and powerful that they were able at times to control the government. In addition to their priestly functions, they served as physicians, practicing their art of healing chiefly through magic. The "black art" of the priests and wise men of Egypt, with its incantations and enchantments, was one of their chief weapons in maintaining their power.

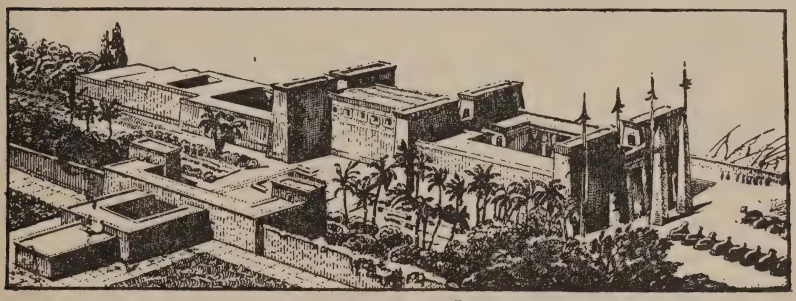
As early as the Pyramid Age, a thousand years perhaps before the first Hebrew Patriarch set foot in Canaan, the fleets of the Pharaohs had sailed up the coast of Canaan for trade and conquest. There is a record of a naval expedition about the year 2500 B.C.E. for the purpose of putting down a rebellion among the "sand dwellers," as the nomads of the desert were called. From the fact that vineyards and fig trees are reported to have been destroyed, it is believed that the armies of the Pharaoh operated in Canaan.

b. The Middle Kingdom, or Feudal Age

It is unlikely, however, that the later kings of the Old Kingdom, or Pyramid Age, could have been strong enough to maintain their hold on foreign possessions. For heavy troubles were assailing them at home. The nobles of the kingdom were becoming insubordinate and rebellious. There followed a period of confusion and civil war of which only the scantiest records remain; and when we pick up again the thread of the Egyptian story, it is no longer Memphis in Lower Egypt which is the capital of the country, but Thebes in Upper Egypt. The Pharaohs were compelled to share their power with their feudal barons, whose magnificent tombs are cut in the cliffs between Memphis and Thebes. The age, lasting

until about 1800 B.C.E., has been described as the Feudal Age or Middle Kingdom. The principal structures were no longer pyramids but temples, and the greatest temples were those of Luxor and Karnak, near Thebes. The Karnak temple, the most splendid of them, which is nearly a quarter of a mile long, was begun by the kings of the Feudal Age, continued by their successors, and not finished until two thousand years later!

In the cliff tombs of the feudal barons, a large number of papyrus scrolls have been discovered, in which the Egyptians recorded their thoughts on religion and social



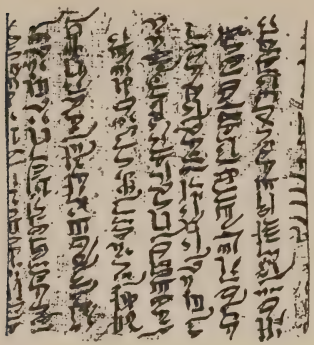
THE TEMPLE OF LUXOR

The picture shows a restoration of this magnificent temple. The approach was flanked by two rows of sphinxes that led up to two obelisks in front of the main entrance. Then came an open courtyard, a closed shrine, and various supplementary chambers in the rear.

relations, and wrote down their knowledge of medicine and mathematics. There were rolls of papyrus which were deemed to be particularly useful to the dead. They contained hymns and incantations to Osiris, the god who judged the dead, and before whom they appeared to have their souls weighed in the balance. The rolls contained other information for enabling the deceased to achieve everlasting life." They came to be called the "Book of the Dead."

Other writings contained fanciful or true accounts of

journeys in foreign lands. One of them is the marvelous tale of a sailor who was shipwrecked in the Red Sea, and who, after many thrilling but incredible adventures, returned to Egypt with wealth and honor. Then there is the story of Sinuhi which is directly related to Palestine, and which has all the earmarks of truth.



FROM THE STORY OF SINUHI

This portion of the Sinuhi Papyrus reads as follows: "He placed me at the head of his children. He gave me his eldest daughter in marriage. He made me select for myself the choicest portion of his land. It was a goodly land named Yaa. There were figs in it and vines. More plentiful than water was its wine. Copious was its honey, plenteous its oil. All fruits were upon its trees." This description is suggestive of Canaan. (The illustration shows the rapid, cursive form of writing known as Demotic, which grew out of hieroglyphic picture writing.)

Sinuhi lived toward the beginning of the Twelfth Dynasty, or about the year 2000 B.C.E., when Hammurabi was welding Babylonia into a powerful kingdom, and the first Hebrew Patriarch was roaming through the "Fertile Crescent." Compelled to flee from his native land, Sinuhi finds refuge in the court of a Palestinian prince where he meets with other Egyptians who reside there. Messengers are referred to who ply regularly between the two countries. The description of his place of refuge, though colored perhaps by a lively sense of gratitude, bears eloquent testimony to its fertility. "There were figs and grapes and more wine than water," writes the chronicler. "Honey was abundant and oil was plentiful and all sorts of fruit hung on the trees. There was wheat and barley and numerous flocks and herds of all kinds." He received excellent treatment from his princely host. "I had wine

every day, boiled meat and roast goose," he reports. In his old age he was pardoned by his king and returned to Egypt. The story shows how numerous were the threads that connected Egypt and Canaan and justifies the belief that the civilization of Egypt must already have influenced the people of the north.

There is still other evidence of both commercial and political relations between the Egypt of the Feudal Age and Palestine. At Gezer, on the eastern edge of the coastal plain of Canaan, there seems to have been an Egyptian colony. Many scarabs, or stone images of

MERCHANTS FROM CANAAN TRADING IN EGYPT

This carving was found in the tomb of an Egyptian noble. A group of bearded, aquiline-nosed Semites have come into Egypt to trade. They wear sandals and gay-patterned clothing.

the sacred beetle, dating from the Twelfth Dynasty, or about the year 2000 B.C.E., have been found there. A picture in one of the cliff tombs along the Nile shows a group of "sand dwellers," headed by their sheik, bringing green eye paint to Egypt. Senwosri or Sesostris III, a ruler of the Twelfth Dynasty, led a military expedition into Canaan. It is doubtful, however, if at this period Egypt exercised real control over her northern neighbor.

It happened, in fact, that about the year 1700 B.C.E., Egypt herself was conquered by invaders from the north. They were the Hyksos, or "shepherd kings," nomads of an unknown race, who held sway over Egypt for more

than a hundred years. Whether the Hyksos themselves were Semites or not, it is fairly certain that large numbers of Semites accompanied them. The country must have been divided and enfeebled by civil war, or the invaders would not have found her such easy prey. Like the mountaineers who broke into Babylonia after Hammurabi, they came with the horse which now appeared in Egypt for the first time, and must have been a great help toward victory. The hateful foreign domination left a bitter memory in Egypt which lasted long after it was overthrown by the founder of the illustrious Eighteenth Dynasty.

c. Age of the New Empire

The expulsion of the Hyksos, about the year 1580 B.C.E., ushered in a new age in the history of Egypt, the Age of the New Empire. It was an age of war and con-

An Ancient Egyptian Charioteer

He gallops over the battle-field, trampling the bodies of his foes, discharging his arrows and steering the horses with his body, around which the reins have been passed.

quest. The Egyptian horses and chariots, inherited from the Hyksos, thundered through all the neighboring lands as far north as the Euphrates River and as far south as the fourth cataract of the Nile in Nubia. Each Pharaoh deemed it his chief glory to push the bounds of his empire beyond those of his predecessor, and on the walls and columns of the huge temples at Karnak and Luxor, his sculptors, with loyal exaggeration, recorded his brilliant exploits on the field of battle. Egypt became the first world power.

The greatest of those Egyptian conquerors was Thutmose III who ruled from about 1500 to 1450 B.C.E. After many campaigns, he crushed the vassal princes of Canaan and Syria who had rebelled against him. One of his battles was fought near the city of Megiddo, in the Valley of Jezreel, the most famous battle-ground of history, later called Armageddon. The empire reached its zenith of power and splendor under the reign of his grandson, Thutmose IV, who sacrificed captured kings to his god Amon in Thebes.

The decline of the Empire began under Amenhotep IV, the grandson of Thutmose IV. Amenhotep attempted to bring about a religious revolution in Egypt. He ordered the worship of all gods to be abolished, with the exception of the sun god whom alone he recognized, and whom he adored under the name of Aton. In token of his faith, he changed his name to Akhenaton which means "profitable to Aton." At El-Amarna, between the ancient Memphis and the imperial city of Thebes, he built himself a new capital, for at Thebes the priests of Amon, the god against whom his religious rage was especially vehement, were very powerful.

Akhenaton's revolution was a failure, and the strife

to which it led weakened Egypt considerably. Under his son-in-law and successor, the young and weak Tutenkhamon, who is now famous only because, in 1922, his magnificent tomb was found practically intact, the old worship was reëstablished. In the meantime, however, the prestige of Egypt abroad suffered greatly. The vassal princelings of Syria and Palestine took every opportunity to throw off the suzerainty of Egypt. The father of Akhenaton had hit upon the clever device of educating the sons and heirs of these turbulent princes in Egypt, in order to impress them early with the splendor and power of the ruling land. When they returned to reign over their cities in the north, many of them remained loyal to their Egyptian overlord, but they fell to fighting among themselves, and their country was overrun by a new invader.

AMON-RE, GOD OF THE SUN

The sun disk, symbolic of life, is seen in his gorgeous headgear.

On the site where stood El-Amarna, Akhenaton's new capital, letters have been discovered written by the princes of Canaan to their suzerain. The letters are on clay tablets in the cuneiform script. Among them are some from Ebed-hepa who was king of Jerusalem about 1360 B.C.E., and from other princes of Canaan. Professing the most devoted loyalty to his emperor Akhenaton, Ebed-hepa implores him to send troops immediately or "all the lands of my Lord, the King, will be lost." For new invaders have broken into the country and "are capturing the cities of the King." And who are these invaders? They are the "Habiri." "All the lands of the King are in revolt!" he writes. "The country of the King is fallen away to

the Habiri." These Habiri are believed by some to have been tribes of Hebrews.

But the royal reformer was too busy imposing the worship of the sun disk Aton on his unwilling subjects to leave his capital and lead his chariots and archers against the rebels and invaders as his predecessors had done. No doubt the Habiri established themselves in his northern province, and the princes stopped paying tribute. It was not until a new dynasty, the Nineteenth, came to reign over Egypt that military expeditions were again led by the Pharaohs into Canaan and Syria.

A "Page" from One of the El-Amarna Letters

The greatest monarch of the new Dynasty was Rameses II, who reigned for sixty-seven years, from 1292 to 1225 B.C.E. He was an energetic warrior and a passionate builder. Seti I, his predecessor, had fought victoriously against the Nubians and Lybians as well as in Canaan and Syria, and had concluded a treaty of peace with the Hittites. But Rameses had to do the work all over again. His many monuments record his victories in picture and story, and he too made a treaty with the Hittites of which the actual text has been discovered. He took to wife one of the daughters of the Hittite king. He fought also and defeated the Nubians in the south and the Lybians on the west. It is quite likely, however, that his victories, as well as those of his predecessors, were not quite so impressive on the

field of battle as they are in the glowing records on the walls of the monuments. For it is quite remarkable that every Pharaoh had to defeat the enemies of Egypt all over again.

RAMESES II AS A YOUNG MAN

The so-called "Pharaoh of the Bondage" is here shown with the symbol of authority in his right hand.

Egypt as well as Nubia became studded with the monuments which Rameses built to his own glory. He added vastly and magnificently to the temples at Karnak and Luxor, and built himself an immense tomb at Thebes. He also conducted building operations in the region of the Delta, but those were intended for a practical purpose. They were to serve as a base of operations against the enemy in Canaan and Syria. So the city of Tanis was enlarged and beautified, and became the residence of the king. Then he set about building two large fortresses and supply cities, Pithom and Raamses, on the eastern edge of the Delta near the Land of Goshen. There his attention was arrested by a strange people, a people of alien shepherds who had come a long time ago from the north,

and whose presence, it seemed to him, was a menace to Egypt.

We have now followed the main line of Egypt's development from its visible beginnings until the point where it became involved with the fate of the children of Israel. We have seen it stretch through a period of over two thousand years, a period longer than the era by which we reckon our dates. We have noted the main features which mark Egypt's great civilization, the second after the Babylonian with which the Hebrews came into contact. We have seen the vastness and splendor of her tombs and temples, and her art and writing have enabled us to arrive at some understanding of her religion and social system.

Our concern with Egypt will not end here. We shall see that country again and again extend its shadow over the Land of Israel. But now we must return to the children of Israel sojourning in Egypt and follow the strange fortunes that befell them under the new Pharaohs "who knew not Joseph."

§ 3. *A New Pharaoh, in the Age of the Empire, Makes Slaves of the Hebrews Sojourning in Egypt.*

UNTIL the rise of those unfriendly Pharaohs, who are believed to have come in with the Nineteenth Dynasty, about 1350 B.C.E., the lot of the children of Israel in Egypt was a rather happy one. Their life on the fertile grasslands near the eastern border was simple and self-confined. At times, no doubt, they saw the Egyptian armies — the horses and chariots, the spearmen and bowmen — sweep past on their way to Palestine and Syria and still farther north, to conquer or put down rebellion; and among the prisoners who were brought back may have been some of those Habiri who belonged to kindred Hebrew tribes.

But they were too far away from Thebes and El-Amarna and the other centers of Egyptian civilization to be deeply affected by the beliefs and customs of the Egyptians. Probably, also, the Egyptians, despising the occupation of shepherd and regarding them as foreigners and inferiors, refused to mingle with them. Thus, Goshen was a sort of ghetto where the Hebrews were allowed to live undisturbed by the friendly Pharaohs, and where they were fairly well protected against the lure and the glitter of the Egyptian way of life. They were able to keep alive some knowledge of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. They were able to keep alive the memories of their common past and the consciousness that they were a separate people.

"And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them," so the Bible tells us. Moreover, they had acquired possessions in Egypt. They were learning to cultivate the soil and

were building themselves houses. In time, they might have adopted the other arts as well as the religion of the Egyptians. They might have mingled with them and become lost among them.

It was an oppressor that saved them from this fate in Egypt just as oppressors were to save them from a similar fate in other lands at other times. "Now there arose a new king over Egypt who knew not Joseph." He was, in all likelihood, the great conqueror and builder, Rameses II. On the eastern border, which he determined to fortify, he found this alien people who were of the same race as those restless and rebellious northern tribesmen. Was it not likely, he asked, that these Hebrews, "when there befalleth us any war," might "join themselves unto our enemies and fight against us, and get them up out of the land?" For they had become numerous and strong, and were possessed of a proud and free spirit, the desert spirit of their ancestors. Therefore, their numbers must be kept down and their spirit broken.

MUMMY OF RAMESES II

This shows the oppressor of the Israelites as he looks to-day. He died about 1225 B.C.E. at about the age of ninety.

We are told how the Pharaoh set out to accomplish both objects. To prevent them from multiplying, the order went out: "Every son that is born, ye shall cast

into the river." And to break their spirit, the Egyptians "set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh store cities Pithom and Raamses."

In imposing this forced labor upon them, the Pharaoh treated the Hebrews no worse than his other subjects. The immense monuments required a vast amount of human labor. For the pyramids and temples, huge slabs of rock had to be cut out of the quarries in the desert, dragged for long distances, and set in place without the aid of steam-driven or other kinds of machinery. For

SLAVES OF ANCIENT EGYPT MAKING BRICKS

The taskmaster, club in hand, is shown in the upper right corner. In the lower left corner the clay is being mixed. It is then carried to the brick molder shown at work near the taskmaster. Another slave at the left is piling up the bricks to dry in the sun. At the right, just beneath the taskmaster, a slave is taking some bricks away to be used for the palaces or temples of the Pharaoh.

the palaces and fortresses, the making of bricks alone required armies of laborers. Now, the rulers of Egypt solved their labor problem very simply. They forced their people to work for them by a system of labor conscription. Human life was cheap. The fertile Nile valley bred human beings in large numbers, and the captives from foreign lands added to the labor armies. The civilization of Egypt was built on human bondage.

But if the Egyptians, enslaved from time immemorial, took their bondage as a matter of course, the Hebrews were unable to do so. For those in whose veins still ran the blood of the free sons of the desert, it was tremendously hard to be slaves. Their taskmasters certainly had no easy time with them. The children of Israel chafed savagely under the yoke. Never throughout their long history did they forget the bitter taste of the slavery of Egypt. The account in the Bible echoes their wrath. "And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigor. And they made their lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field." In their subsequent experiences, the memory of this bondage is constantly invoked. And a hatred against slavery as a human institution was branded into their souls, and has remained with them to this day.

In the meantime, however, the lot of the children of Israel seemed hopeless. Rameses had died and his son Merneptah was now the Pharaoh. Like his predecessors, Merneptah waged a campaign in Canaan. A pillar has been discovered on which his victories are carved, and among the conquered nations is mentioned Israel. Here is part of the inscription with the customary exaggerations and bombast with which monarchs adorn the records of their achievements:

> Plundered is the Canaan with every evil,
> Carried off is Ashkelon,
> Seized upon is Gezer,
> Yenoam is made as a thing not existing.
> Israel is desolated, his seed is not;
> Palestine has become a widow for Egypt.
> All lands are united, they are pacified;

Every one that is turbulent is bound by King
Merneptah, who gives life like Re every day.

It is believed that the Israel mentioned in this record consisted of some nomad Hebrew tribes other than those who were still sojourning in Egypt. If so, Merneptah had no cause to love his Hebrew subjects against whose

THE STORY OF MERNEPTAH'S VICTORIES

This is the stela, or monument, of the Pharaoh Merneptah on which his victories against the Lybians, the Canaanites and other nations, are recorded. The name "Israel" (we have put a border around it) occurs in the second line from the bottom.

kinsmen he had to fight in Palestine. The new ruler, in fact, seems to have made their bondage more severe. "And the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage."

But Jacob was dead, Joseph was dead, and all his bold brothers were dead. Would there arise a leader in Israel strong enough to deliver them?

§ 4. *A Great Leader, Moses the Liberator, Rises Up and Leads Them Forth from the "House of Bondage."*

HE AROSE, the great leader, and he led the children of Israel out of the bondage of Egypt.

It is doubtful if the annals of mankind contain a sublimer figure than that of the liberator Moses. Of course, as in the case of every personality who has left a deep impress upon his own and later ages, many legends have gathered about him, more perhaps than about any other historic personage. It is impossible, in fact, to distinguish between the historic and the legendary. Scholars have pored long and intensely over the pages of the Bible where the events in which Moses figured are recorded, and they have searched papyri and monuments of Egypt for some mention of his name. So far, their search in the records of Egypt has been fruitless. Accordingly, various theories and conjectures have been advanced with regard to Moses, some of them even denying that he ever existed. The great majority of scholars, however, do not hold that view. They are agreed that Moses was a great historic figure, and they accept the importance which is ascribed to him by the Bible.

But we need not linger over those theories and conjectures. Moses the liberator, the divine legislator, the prophetic statesman, the pure and humble man of God, is a definite personality in the consciousness of the Jewish people and of all mankind. And, as a modern Jewish philosopher* has pointed out, it is the personality of Moses as so conceived and generally accepted, which is historically important. This personality, embodying as it does the highest ideals of the Jewish people, has been an active force in their history through the ages. Expressing the Jewish character at its noblest, the personality of Moses has contributed to the molding of this character.

And what is true of Moses is true of Abraham. It is true, also, not only of the personalities but of the events. That the events occurred exactly as recorded or not, is not so important as the fact that they represent living traditions. They are historic in the sense that they have made history. True, we are not sure of the dates of those events; many of them have not been verified; others are of miraculous character. But all of that is unimportant compared to the fact that they have become the dynamic historic memories of the Jewish people.

Of all those memories, the exodus from Egypt has engraved itself most deeply. Later generations and leaders invoked it again and again as proof of God's power and of Israel's high destiny. To mankind at large it has become the most significant symbol of liberty. And among all the heroes of Jewish history, Moses stands supreme.

What a life and character unfold before us as we read his story! What sublimity and gentleness, what

* Achad Ha'am in his essay "Moses."

humility and grandeur, what strength and wisdom! Out of a horde of slaves, crushed in spirit, sullen and rebellious, he fashioned a nation dedicated to a great ideal. And when, after a generation of ceaseless toil and bitter disappointments, he brought them to the threshold of the Promised Land, he himself could only look upon it from the summit of a mountain before he was gathered to his fathers.

It was fortunate for his people that Moses was brought up as a free man, for slavery might have crushed his spirit also. The daughter of the Pharaoh, after rescuing the infant Moses from the Nile, brought him to her father's court, and there he grew up in the splendor of Egypt, and became skilled in her arts and learning. But luxury and high station could not harden his heart. He saw one day an Egyptian taskmaster beat a Hebrew slave, and pity and anger rose up in him. He slew the Egyptian. But soon afterwards, when he stepped in to pacify a quarrel between two Hebrews, one of them charged him with the deed, and Moses, afraid of the Pharaoh's punishment, fled from Egypt and found refuge in the desert of Midian.

There, a change came over his life. He went back to the occupation of his forefathers. He became a shepherd for a man named Jethro whose daughter, Zipporah, he took to wife. Now he wandered with his flocks in the stillness of the desert where, by day, the fierce sun made the air quiver about him. But at night peace descended on earth. The stars were large and brilliant, and hung quite near. And the soul of Moses responded to the moods of the desert. Now there rose up in him a fierce anger against his people's oppressors. Now there

stole into his spirit the peace that comes with the knowledge that God is at hand.

Then came the great crisis in his life. For forty years he had been living far from his people — long enough to forget them. But one day, on Mount Horeb, the Mountain of God, he saw a bush that burned and burned and was not consumed, even as the soul of man in which the flame of a great purpose is burning. And he heard a voice that spoke to him and told him to go forth and deliver his people.

MERNEPTAH

Who is believed to have been the Pharaoh of the Exodus. (From a statue found at Thebes.)

He could not but obey that voice. It was the voice of his own soul. But being exceedingly modest and unskilled in speech, he took his older brother Aaron to be his spokesman with his people and with the Pharaoh. So he came before the elders of the people and bid them prepare for the journey. He came before the Pharaoh and said: "Let my people go!"

But why should the Pharaoh let them go? In the first place he needed slaves to build new cities and monuments to his glory. Then, these Israelites had a strange notion that Canaan was their land. They might go there and start fresh trouble. This Pharaoh is believed to have been the same Merneptah, the son of Rameses II, who led a military expedition into Canaan and boasted

of having "desolated" Israel, the kinsmen of his slaves. It would be decidedly foolish to let those rebels obtain reënforcements. So he refused the demand of Moses and even made the bondage of the Hebrews heavier.

But in the end, the Pharaoh let them go. He did not change his mind easily. The land of Egypt had to be visited by a series of frightful plagues, culminating in the slaying of the first-born, before the Pharaoh, convinced that he was being punished by a superior power, agreed to let his slaves depart.

The great day arrived, the day of freedom. Hastily the people got ready for the journey. So great was their haste, that there was no time for the dough of their bread to become leavened. They went "with their young and with their old, with their sons and their daughters, with their flocks and their herds." They left Egypt as one runs from a plague, for a plague it had been to them, and tradition records that many plagues — of blood and frogs, of darkness, hail and death — had to be heaped upon it before they could be free of it.

WHERE THE ISRAELITES TOILED AS SLAVES

This is the site of ancient Pithom, one of the store cities built by the children of Israel for the Pharaoh. The massive brick foundations of an ancient fort are here shown.

From Raamses, the city built by their toil, they journeyed to a place called Succoth, then on to Pithom, the second city of their bondage, "in the edge of the

wilderness." "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light." Finally they encamped near the shore of what was then an inlet of the Red Sea. But what is that in the distance behind them? It is a great cloud of dust and in it they discern the army of the Pharaoh — men, horses and chariots — advancing in hot pursuit. The king had again changed his mind.

But the former slaves were just as fickle as the Pharaoh. "Because there were no graves in Egypt hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness?" they cried to Moses. But a new miracle was to happen. A great storm arose and it swept away the waters of the sea and the children of Israel marched to the opposite shore in safety. And when the Egyptians followed, the wind subsided, the waters returned, and the mighty army of the Pharaoh was engulfed in the waves.

A song of triumph rose up from the hosts of Israel:

> "Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them;
> They sank as lead in the mighty waters.
> Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the mighty?"

And now the road lay before them, the desert road to the Promised Land.

TOPIC TWO: LITERATURE

1. THE BIRTH AND EARLY MANHOOD OF MOSES

(Exodus* 2^{1-22})

A STORY similar to the Biblical account of the rescue of Moses from the Nile has been found in Babylonian inscriptions. In it, Sargon, king of Agada, tells how, after his birth, his mother placed him in a basket of reeds and consigned him to a river which bore him down to his rescuer. The inference that the Hebrews must have adopted the

* The second book of the Bible is the Book of Exodus, so called because the departure, or *exodus,* of the Jews from Egypt is the leading event which it records. Its Hebrew name is *Shemoth,* a word meaning "names," for the Book opens with a list of the names of those who went down from Canaan into Egypt at Joseph's invitation.

The Book contains legal enactments as well as history, besides detailed instructions for the building of the Tabernacle, the portable sanctuary to accompany the Israelites in their wanderings through the desert. The historical section includes an account of the oppressions of the Pharaohs, the birth and early life of Moses, his flight to Midian, his vision of the burning bush, and his return to Egypt charged with his great mission. The demand Moses makes on the Pharaoh to let the Israelites go, results in increased oppression, followed by the ten plagues, which compel the Pharaoh to yield. Then comes an account of the crossing of the Red Sea, the journeyings through the desert, the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai, the sin of the golden calf, and the construction of the Tabernacle.

The legal portion of Exodus (Chaps. 21–24) is sometimes called the "Book of the Covenant" (Hebrew, *Sefer Ha-berith*), and it includes besides the Decalogue or Ten Commandments, a variety of laws, criminal and civil, as well as injunctions for the humane treatment of widows, orphans and strangers.

The following selections from Exodus are recommended for additional reading:

a. The Liberator and the Oppressor (Chaps. $5–6^{1-13}$).
b. The Deliverance at the Red Sea (Chap. 14).
c. On the Road to Mount Sinai (Chap. 16).
d. Laws of Justice and Purity (Chaps. 22–23).
e. The Building of the Tabernacle (Chap. 35^{4-35}).
f. The Dedication of the Tabernacle (Chap. 40).

Babylonian story is not warranted, for quite a similar story exists also in Hindu literature telling how the great hero Karna, whose father was the god of the sun, was, shortly after his birth, sent floating in a basket down the river and rescued by a childless couple. It is entirely possible for a story of this character to arise independently among different peoples.

The leading trait in the character of Moses, his passion for justice, is well illustrated in three of the incidents of his early life recorded in the passage that follows: his slaying of the Egyptian taskmaster, his remonstrances with the Hebrew who smites his fellow, and the help he brings the maidens at the well in Midian.

AND there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi. And the woman conceived, and bore a son; and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months.[1]

And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes,[2] and daubed it with slime and with pitch; and she put the child therein, and laid it in the flags by the river's brink. And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him.

And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe in the river; and her maidens walked along by the riverside; and she saw the ark among the flags, and sent her handmaid to fetch it. And she opened it, and saw it, even the child; and behold a boy that wept. And she had compassion on him, and said: "This is one of the Hebrews' children."

Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter: "Shall I go and call thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?" And Pharaoh's daughter said to her: "Go." And the maiden went and called the child's mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her: "Take this child away, and nurse

[1] She hid him from the officers of the Pharaoh who had commanded that all male Hebrew infants should be cast into the Nile River.

[2] The bulrushes were the papyrus reeds which grow on the banks of the Nile and are useful for basket weaving as well as paper making.

it for me, and I will give thee thy wages." And the woman took the child, and nursed it. And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son.[3] And she called his name Moses, and said: "Because I drew him out of the water."[4]

And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown up, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens; and he saw an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he smote the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand.

And he went out the second day, and, behold, two men of the Hebrews were striving together; and he said to him that did the wrong: "Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow?" And he said: "Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us? thinkest thou to kill me, as thou didst kill the Egyptian?" And Moses feared, and said: "Surely the thing is known."

Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian;[5] and he sat down by a well.

Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters; and they came and drew water, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock. And the shepherds came and drove them away; but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock. And when they came to Reuel their father, he said: "How is it that ye are come so soon to-day?" And they said: "An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, and moreover he drew water for us, and watered the flock." And he said unto his daughters: "And where is he? why is it that ye have left the man? call him, that he may eat bread."

And Moses was content to dwell with the man; and he gave Moses Zipporah his daughter. And she bore a son, and he called his name Gershom;[6] for he said: "I have been a stranger in a strange land."

[3] *i.e.*, she adopted him as her son.

[4] In Hebrew Moses is *Mosheh.* Its derivation is from *mashah,* meaning "he drew out."

[5] In the Sinai Peninsula east of Horeb.

[6] Hebrew *ger,* stranger; *shom,* there.

2. THE BURNING BUSH

(Exodus 3 1-20)

A POWERFUL impression of the spirituality and mystery of the Deity is conveyed by the event recorded in this passage. It marks the great spiritual crisis in the life of Moses. The story lends itself admirably to allegorical and metaphysical interpretation, and has been a fruitful source of religious and poetic inspiration.

NOW Moses was keeping the flock of Jethro[7] his father-in-law, the priest of Midian; and he led the flock to the farthest end of the wilderness, and came to the mountain of God, unto Horeb.[8]

And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said: "I will turn aside now, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt."

And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said: "Moses, Moses." And he said: "Here am I." And He said: "Draw not nigh hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."[9] Moreover He said: "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

And the Lord said: "I have surely seen the affliction of My people that are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their pains; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey;[10] unto the place of the Ca-

[7] In the previous selection the father-in-law of Moses is called Reuel, meaning "the friend of God."

[8] Mount Horeb is known also as Mount Sinai (See map p. 120).

[9] In the Orient it is still the custom to remove one's shoes before entering a holy place.

[10] *i.e.*, Palestine.

naanite, and the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite. And now, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto Me; moreover I have seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth My people the children of Israel out of Egypt."

And Moses said unto God: "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" And He said: "Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be the token unto thee, that I have sent thee: when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain." [11]

And Moses said unto God: "Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them: The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me: What is His name? what shall I say unto them?" And God said unto Moses: "I AM THAT I AM"; [12] and He said: "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel: I AM hath sent me unto you."

And God said moreover unto Moses: "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel: The LORD,[13] the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you; this is My name forever, and this is My memorial unto all generations. Go, and gather the elders [14] of Israel together, and say unto them: The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, hath appeared unto me, saying: I have surely remembered you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt. And I have said: I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of

[11] In obedience to this "token," Moses later led the Israelites to Mount Horeb or Sinai where they received the Ten Commandments and the Torah.

[12] This name is expressive of God's infiniteness. He is without beginning and without end, the cause and essence of all being.

[13] The Hebrew word which, throughout the Bible, is translated "the LORD" is *YHWH*, the exact pronunciation of which, owing to the absence of vowels, is uncertain. The word was at one time pronounced *Jehovah*, but scholars are now of the opinion that the pronunciation *Yahweh* is more correct.

[14] The elders were the heads of families or clans who made up a sort of governing body.

the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite, unto a land flowing with milk and honey. And they shall hearken to thy voice.

"And thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him: The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, hath met with us. And now let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God. And I know that the king of Egypt will not give you leave to go, except by a mighty hand. And I will put forth My hand, and smite Egypt with all My wonders which I will do in the midst thereof. And after that he will let you go."

3. THE SONG OF DELIVERANCE

(EXODUS 15 1-18)

THE children of Israel have passed in safety through the Red Sea, and the forces of the Pharaoh, sent to overtake them, have been overwhelmed in the waves. Moses then sings this passionate song of triumph.

Before it was written down, this song was, no doubt, passed on from generation to generation by word of mouth. It did not, of course, come down intact. In the last lines the writer refers to events, like the settlement in Palestine and the building of the Temple, which occurred a long time after Moses.

I WILL sing unto the LORD, for He is highly exalted;
The horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea.

The LORD is my strength and song,
And He is become my salvation;
This is my God, and I will glorify Him;
My father's God, and I will exalt Him.

The LORD is a man of war,[15]
The LORD is His name.

Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath He cast into the sea,
And his chosen captains are sunk in the Red Sea.

[15] *i.e.*, a warrior.

The deeps cover them —
They went down into the depths like a stone.

Thy right hand, O LORD, glorious in power,
Thy right hand, O LORD, dasheth in pieces the enemy.
And in the greatness of Thine excellency Thou overthrowest
them that rise up against Thee;
Thou sendest forth Thy wrath, it consumeth them as stubble.

And with the blast of Thy nostrils the waters were piled up —
The floods stood upright as a heap;
The deeps were congealed in the heart of the sea.[16]

The enemy said:
"I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil;
My lust shall be satisfied upon them;
I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them."
Thou didst blow with Thy wind, the sea covered them;[17]
They sank as lead in the mighty waters.

Who is like unto Thee, O LORD, among the mighty?
Who is like unto Thee, glorious in holiness,
Fearful in praises,[18] doing wonders?

Thou stretchedst out Thy right hand—
The earth swallowed them.

Thou in Thy love hast led the people that Thou hast redeemed;
Thou hast guided them in Thy strength to Thy holy habitation.

The peoples have heard, they tremble;
Pangs have taken hold on the inhabitants of Philistia.[19]
Then were the chiefs of Edom affrighted;
The mighty men of Moab, trembling taketh hold upon them;
All the inhabitants of Canaan are melted away.

[16] *i.e.*, the waves were as though frozen into solid walls.

[17] *i.e.*, the waters flowed back with the change of wind and overwhelmed the Egyptians.

[18] *i.e.*, causing dread by the great deeds for which he is praised.

[19] The southern part of the coastal plain on which the Philistines settled (See map p. 120).

Terror and dread falleth upon them;
By the greatness of Thine arm they are as still as a stone;
Till Thy people pass over, O LORD,
Till the people pass over that Thou hast gotten.

Thou bringest them in, and plantest them in the mountain of Thine inheritance,
The place, O LORD, which Thou hast made for Thee to dwell in,
The sanctuary, O LORD, which Thy hands have established.

The LORD shall reign for ever and ever.

TOPIC THREE

Sinai and the Desert

TOPIC THREE

Sinai and the Desert

§ 1. *Instead of Taking the Direct Route North, Moses Leads His People to Mt. Sinai in the Desert.*

§ 2. *At Sinai the People Accept the Ten Commandments, the Foundation of Their Religion and Ethics.*

§ 3. *Moses Proceeds to Teach Them the Torah or the Laws to Govern Their Religious and Social Life.*

§ 4. *The Journey Is Resumed and, after Many and Long Trials, the Hebrews Conquer the Lands East of the Jordan Where Moses Is "Gathered to His Fathers."*

TOPIC THREE: LITERATURE

1. The Revelation at Mount Sinai (*Exodus* 19–20 [14]).
2. The Sin of the Golden Calf (*Exodus* 32 [1-34]).
3. The Sabbatical and Jubilee Years (*Leviticus* 25 [1-28]).
4. Story of the Twelve Spies (*Numbers* 13–14 [10]).
5. Story of Balaam the Magician (*Numbers* 22 [2]–24).
6. The Farewell of Moses (*Deuteronomy* 8; 10 [12]–11 [21]).
7. The Death of Moses (*Deuteronomy* 34).

TOPIC THREE

Sinai and the Desert

§ 1. *Instead of Taking the Direct Route North, Moses Leads His People to Mt. Sinai in the Desert*

THE journey of the children of Israel through the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt to Canaan is the most momentous migration in the annals of mankind. The record of that migration, as set down in the last four Books of Moses, tells how a horde of former slaves were welded into a people by the genius of a great leader. But this people was to be like no other. It was a people selected and set apart for a divine purpose; consecrated, individually and collectively, to the highest ethical law. That law of personal purity and social justice is part and parcel of the great migration. And mankind has acknowledged it as its highest goal.

It was a superhuman task that Moses undertook. But he started his people on its road, the stony uphill road of its history. They were not an easy people to lead, not "plastic" in the hands of the statesman. They were a hard, a stiff-necked people. The first generation, upon which slavery had laid its blight, seemed altogether impossible. It was unfit to enter the Promised Land. So Moses determined to wait until the first had died and the second had come to man's estate.

For forty years, through deserts and dangers, he led the horde of former slaves. It was a generation that

too often turned its gaze backward. In the hunger and thirst of the desert, the former slaves saw visions of the steaming fleshpots of Egypt. When the strong hand of the leader relaxed, they fell back upon the animal worship of their former masters. They were peevish, sullen and rebellious.

Nevertheless, there were times in the wilderness when the spirit of God entered into these former slaves. Was

PHILISTINE PRISONERS OF WAR

As carved on an Egyptian monument. Notice the feathered headgear. The hands of the second man from the right are shackled in wooden handcuffs suspended from his neck.

it the magic of the great leader alone which on such occasions transformed them into a holy people? Is it, in general, possible for a leader to lift a people to great heights regardless of the people's basic character? One of the legends connected with the migration relates that the Law of Sinai had been offered to every other people, who rejected it, before it was accepted by the Hebrews. Was there not something of the spirit of the Patriarchs smouldering in those bondmen?

But let us follow them on their journey from the shores of the Red Sea which had been made dry for their passage. The goal, of course, was Canaan. It was a goal that might be reached by journeying almost directly north. Nevertheless, Moses turned south and skirted the western coast of the Sinai Peninsula past the bitter springs of Marah and the wells and palm groves of Elim.

He took the opposite, roundabout road, because the direct way would have brought him into the territory of the Philistines on the coastal plain of Canaan. Moses knew the Philistines to be a powerful people. They had been able to render a good account of themselves even against the armies of the Pharaohs. His rabble, he feared, would be cut to pieces by them, and the fugitives would hurry back to Egypt.

It was at just about that time that the Philistines had broken upon the scene of the ancient world in the East. They were not Semites, but Aryans. Their original home had been the island of Crete in the Mediterranean, out of which they were driven by the invasion of a new people from the north, the Greeks. They fled in their ships to the coasts of Canaan and the neighboring lands. The Egyptians fought them on sea and land, and carvings have been found in Egypt depicting a naval victory against them won by the Egyptians about the time of the Exodus, as well as rows of Philistine prisoners in their peculiar feathered headgear, captured in battle. But the Pharaohs were unable to prevent them from settling on the fertile coast from Joppa southward to the desert.

Still another reason is advanced to explain why Moses turned south. That way lay Horeb or the Mount

of God, where Moses had been charged with his great mission. From of old, the mountains of this region, especially Mount Sinai, had been regarded as holy ground. It was essential to prepare the people for the arduous enterprise that lay before them, to strengthen their spirit and consecrate them to the task. Amid the

THE JOURNEY FROM EGYPT

The broken line indicates the probable route of the children of Israel.

gaunt and craggy heights of Horeb, sacred in their memory as a place where God's Presence was wont to dwell, the consecration should take place. The covenant of the Patriarchs should there be renewed.

So the refugees from Egypt plunged into the wastes of the Sinai Peninsula, a region of desolate heights and plains, destined to be their dwelling place for the next generation. This peninsula is a tongue of land which dips into the Red Sea, and is separated from Arabia by the Gulf of Akaba, and from Egypt by the Gulf of Suez. Its northern reaches include a number of plains, the Desert of Shur on the west and, on the east, the Deserts of Paran and of Zin, all of them extensions of the Negeb or southern hills of Canaan. In the same region lay the land of Edom. As we go south from Kadesh-barnea, the most important oasis of these dreary plains, and cross the stony hills, we come upon a series of mountains of which Horeb is the most important. From very ancient times the Egyptian Pharaohs sent their criminals and prisoners of war to these mountains to mine turquoise and copper. Some of the summits reach a height of over eight thousand feet. They are volcanic peaks, black, gray and brown, bare and jagged and of fantastic shape.

On toward Horeb the procession continued from Elim. At Marah they had complained for lack of water. Now the food gave out and the hungry people turned on their leaders, Moses and Aaron. "Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in Egypt," they cried, "when we sat by the fleshpots, when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger." But they were not allowed to starve. They ate the miraculous

manna of the desert, and the flesh of the quail, flocks of which are still sometimes blown upon those coasts.

So hunger was conquered and thirst, but yet another enemy had to be overcome before they could stand in front of the mountain of consecration. At Rephidim the fierce Amalekites barred their passage. Commanded by Joshua and supported by the inspiring presence of Moses, the children of Israel fought their first battle and won their first victory. But Amalek became the hereditary enemy. "The Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation."

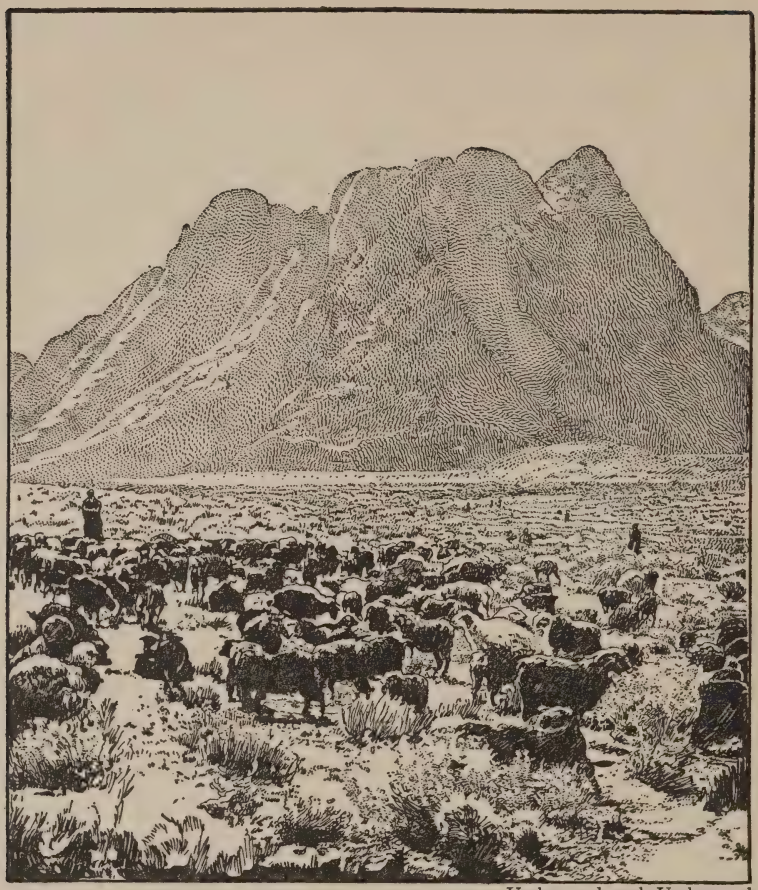
They encamped at last before Mount Sinai, where, according to tradition, they underwent their profoundest spiritual experience. Having accepted the summons to become "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" they prepared themselves for the solemn initiation. The act of inner consecration was accompanied by impressive external signs and wonders: smoke and fire, thunder and lightning and earthquake. And the people heard the voice of God proclaiming the basic law which was to govern their lives.

§ 2. *At Sinai the People Accept the Ten Commandments, the Foundation of Their Religion and Ethics.*

THIS basic law is embodied in the Decalogue or Ten Words, more commonly called the Ten Commandments. Tradition has surrounded these Ten Words with solemn and exalted circumstances. God proclaimed them in His own voice in the hearing of all the people. Then He wrote them down on two tablets of stone which He gave to Moses. The Ten Words were a pledge and a witness of the ancient covenant with the Patriarchs now renewed, hence the stone tablets were named "Tables of Testimony" and "Tables of the Covenant."

This Biblical tradition is an index of the immense importance with which the Ten Words have been invested. Not only the people to whom they were given, but many other nations have accepted them as the basic code of religious and ethical law. All the additional laws which Moses gave the children of Israel are looked upon merely as the natural development or extension of the Ten Commandments. The vast legal system which grew up in the ages that followed is regarded as flowing from the same fountain head. Other nations also look upon their laws as having the same basis. They are contained in the Decalogue just as the flower is contained in the seed.

The Ten Commandments offer a guide not only for that field of human conduct which may be controlled by law, for there is a field of conduct which formal legal enactments are unable to reach. It concerns the impulses that move the heart, that make a man a good neighbor or a bad neighbor, a good son or a bad son, generous or churlish. For this extra-legal behavior, also, men have found in the Ten Words guidance and inspiration.



Underwood and Underwood.

MOUNT SINAI AND THE PLAIN OF ASSEMBLAGE

The granite mass of Mount Sinai, nine thousand feet high, looms in the background. In the foreground is the traditional site of the encampment of the children of Israel.

The Decalogue may be divided into two parts, the first consisting of those commandments which establish the relation of man to God, the second of those which define his relation to his fellow man. The first part therefore may be called religious, the second moral or ethical.

The first four Words belong to the first part. They begin with the pronouncement which provides the authority or sanction for all that follows: "I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." This, of course, is not a commandment and proves that the Hebrew designation, "Ten Words," is the more appropriate.

The second, third and fourth must also be classed with the first or religious group. The second is a brief and clear statement of the monotheistic faith. Its first words are: "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." It goes on to a strict prohibition of idolatry. In order to safeguard the people against the temptations of idol worship, it forbids the making of all "graven images" or "any manner of likeness," objects with which the land of Egypt was teeming. For, while the graven image may at first be regarded as a *symbol* of the divinity, it will end by being regarded as the divinity itself and worshiped as such. At the same time, this prohibition has had its effect in checking the impulse of the Hebrew people toward the plastic arts: sculpture and painting. It has served to make them concentrate on two other arts, music and literature, especially the second.

The third "Word": "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain," is taken as a prohibition against swearing. The taking of frequent oaths in the name of the Deity, which men are disposed to do, has a demoralizing effect on them and tends, at the same time, to undermine their reverence. This prohibition also reflects the feeling of awe which led the Hebrews to refrain from pronouncing the name of God.

The fourth commandment deals with the Sabbath.

"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," it declares. It goes on to prohibit "any manner of work" on that day, and the prohibition is to apply not only to the master of the household, but to his children, his servants and even his beasts of burden, as well as to "the stranger that is within thy gates." For God Himself, says the commandment, had rested from his labors of creation on the seventh day, and had "hallowed it" as a day of rest. In the fifth Book of Moses, where the "Ten Words" are repeated, the people are enjoined to let their servants rest on the Sabbath day in memory of the time when they themselves were servants in the land of Egypt out of which the Lord brought them "with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm."

This commandment may be regarded as belonging to the second as well as to the first group, for it has both a religious and a social or ethical meaning. The Sabbath is a day holy to God, but it is of immense importance to man. As a social institution, nothing which the Hebrews have given the world is of greater value. Its primary significance is spiritual: it gives man the opportunity for bringing holiness into his life. But it has also great social and economic significance. The commandment makes the Sabbath a thoroughly democratic institution. It enjoins equal treatment for the alien and the socially inferior. It even demands kind treatment for the dumb beasts. Nor should its importance for the physical welfare of man be ignored, for periodic rest from toil is essential to his physical health.

The Hebrew Sabbath has been traced to Babylonian origins (see p. 26 *ff.*). But what a difference between the gloomy and portentous Babylonian *Shabattum,* where the element of rest from toil is wholly absent, and the fes-

tive Hebrew Sabbath devoted to exaltation of spirit and recreation of body! For, in spite of all the minute regulations and restrictions with which the Sabbath became surrounded, the element of joy was always present in it. Later generations, also, wove about the Sabbath a web of mystic fancies which gave it a definite personality, the Sabbath Bride, bright, beautiful and holy.

The fifth commandment, "Honor thy father and thy mother," belongs more plainly to the second group, those dealing with ethical rather than religious precepts. Nevertheless, it has sometimes been classed with the first group for the reason that parents were regarded as the representatives of God. It lays down one of the basic laws to safeguard the integrity of the family.

The last five of the "Ten Words" are laws to govern the relations between men, and are, therefore, purely ethical. The sixth declares "Thou shalt not murder." The seventh, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," preserves the sanctity of the marriage tie, and is the second basic safeguard of the purity and integrity of the family. The eighth, "Thou shalt not steal," aims to protect property just as the sixth aims to protect life. The ninth is "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor," while the tenth goes still further, forbidding covetousness or that form of envy which embitters the spirit and leads to crime. "Thou shalt not covet anything that is thy neighbor's," it declares.

It is well to observe that all of these ethical "Words" tell a man what not to do. There is a profound reason for these negatives. Ideal human relations require only that men should respect their neighbors' rights, that they should, in other words, refrain from doing what is manifestly wrong. It is extremely doubtful if happy rela-

tions could exist if men always did what they might think would be good for their neighbor. For the most dreadful cruelties and follies have been committed by men who were convinced that they were doing good, as when they burned their neighbor's body in order to save his soul.

The Jewish Golden Rule reveals a much profounder understanding of social relations and a much greater respect for human nature. Like the ethical precepts of the Ten Commandments, the Jewish Golden Rule is also expressed in the negative. It states: "Do not unto others what is hateful unto thee." In other words, it commands respect for the rights of one's neighbor, and leaves the individual to pursue his own happiness without having it prescribed by somebody else.

Having received and accepted the Ten Words as their religious and moral constitution, the children of Israel, led by Moses, could go forward on their arduous journey through the wilderness.

§ 3. *Moses Proceeds to Teach Them the Torah or the Laws to Govern Their Religious and Social Life*

THE journey was not resumed immediately. For nearly a year the host lay encamped at the foot of Mount Sinai where Moses, instructed by God, taught them the Torah or Law. It consisted largely of regulations designed not for a nomadic people, but for a people leading a settled life. It was to be their law after the conquest of Canaan.

The "statutes and judgments" embraced in this Mosaic code are to be found in the last four of the Five Books of Moses, especially in Exodus and Leviticus, the second and third. The fifth, Deuteronomy, is, as its name signifies, a *repetition of the Law.* In addition to those enactments, the four books contain the record of the journey through the wilderness until the arrival of the children of Israel to the border of the Promised Land.

Now, the scholars have subjected those books to a very searching analysis. They are not in accord with the traditional view that they were written by Moses. Without knowing just when and by whom they were written, they are inclined to believe that the work was done by various persons at different times. The record existed, no doubt, as an oral tradition for many centuries before it was reduced to writing. A good part of it, they claim, was written down during the Seventh and Eighth Centuries B.C.E., in other words, six or seven hundred years after Moses, when the children of Israel were settled in Canaan and ruled by their own kings. Some of it was written down still later and the different parts were then combined into their present form. The

scholars have approached the books in the same manner as geologists study rock formations. They claim to have discovered different threads or *strata* in them, which they assign to different periods and authors.

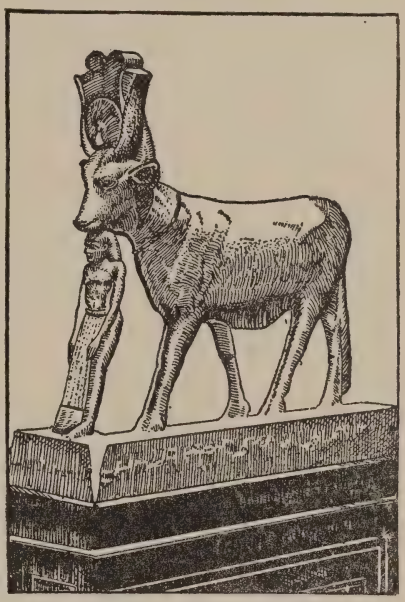
Underwood and Underwood.

THE CRAGGY SUMMIT OF MOUNT SINAI

It is well for us to be aware of the discoveries and opinions of the scholars. But we need not for that reason depart from the course of the account as laid out in the Bible. For, in the first place, those discoveries have not turned aside the main stream of the history of the children of Israel as it flows in the traditional records. And, in the second place, as we have pointed out before, the tradition itself is an historic fact of supreme importance. Centuries after centuries, that tradition has been handed down, shaping and directing the thoughts and deeds of the people, in other words, *making their history*. So that, without minimizing the work of the scholars, we are here, for the two reasons that have been stated, more interested in the tradition than in their discoveries.

So we return to the children of Israel encamped before Sinai, and to Moses their leader. The people had accepted the Ten Words as their fundamental law; they had assumed the high mission of being "a kingdom of

priests and a holy nation." What a delightful place this world would be if people could become noble and righteous by simply saying a word or making a gesture! Unfortunately, the process is tremendously more difficult. The best intentions are often thwarted by ingrained weaknesses, by old habits and low inclinations. Moses learned soon enough how lightly the people could go back on their high resolves. He realized then that the conquest of their meaner selves would be a more difficult labor than the conquest of the Promised Land.



THE EGYPTIAN GODDESS HATHOR

In the shape of a calf. (See illustration, p. 84.) The golden calf of the Israelites is believed to have been suggested by this idol.

Having been summoned by God to ascend the mountain and receive the tablets of stone containing the Ten Words, Moses remained away from the camp for forty days. When he came down again, he saw the people dancing in worship around a golden calf! The absence of the leader had been enough to undermine their faith. They had to have something visible to worship, and they reverted to the animal cult which they had learned from the Egyptians. "These be thy gods, O Israel," they cried, "which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." In his wrath and despair, Moses broke the tablets. Nevertheless, when God pro-

posed to destroy "this stiff-necked people," and make "a great nation" of the seed of Moses, he prayed that they might be forgiven. A second time he ascended the mountain and remained away for forty days and forty nights. "And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face sent forth beams; and they were afraid to come nigh him."

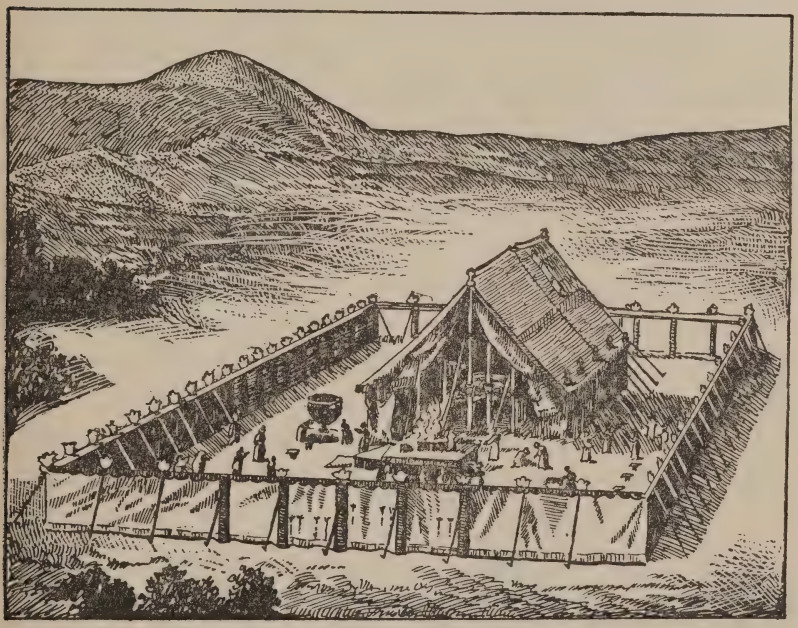
Moses now bent himself to the task of teaching the people the Torah. The Ten Words had to be interpreted. The people had to be taught how to apply them to the affairs of life, to their individual and national problems. And thus began that process of elaboration which every succeeding age took up and carried forward. For every fundamental law requires further enactments, and every age finds itself faced with new problems to which the old laws and forms of life must be adjusted. The life and progress of a people are assured when the adjustments are so made as not to violate its basic law and character and not to break the thread of its historic development. This is the essence of legislative wisdom.

The Laws "between Man and God."

All the laws of Moses were proclaimed by him in the name of God; but just as in the case of the Ten Commandments, we may separate those which are religious in character from those which are ethical or social. This distinction occurs frequently in the thought of Jewish scholars and sages. The first are described as those laws which are "between man and God," the second are those "between man and his neighbor."

The laws that have to do with the mode of worship, or the ritual — and there are a great many of them — belong, of course, to the first group. The Book of Leviti-

cus is devoted largely to such regulations. They prescribe the various offerings and sacrifices — what they were to consist of and when they were to be brought. There were public sacrifices, especially on the festivals, made for the entire people, and there were private sacrifices, such as thank offerings, brought by the individual worshiper. The family of Aaron and the entire tribe of



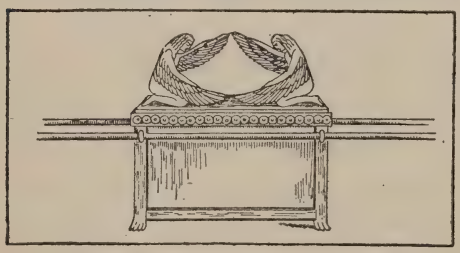
THE TABERNACLE, OR PORTABLE TEMPLE

A reconstruction based on the description in the Bible. In the curtained enclosure is the Tent of Meeting where the Ark of the Covenant was kept. Before the Tent of Meeting stands the sacrificial altar.

Levi were ordained as the priesthood. A portable temple, the Tabernacle, was set up, which became the center of worship for the migrating people. It was built with the freewill offerings of the people and by a group of craftsmen and artists headed by Bezalel of the tribe of Judah and Oholiab of the tribe of Dan. The construction of the Tabernacle, as well as the vestments of the priests,

is described with a great wealth of detail. The most important object in the structure was the gilded Ark in which were placed the "Tables of the Covenant." On these Moses had engraved the Ten Words during his second sojourn in the mountain after the sin of the people had been forgiven.

The most frequent warning which Moses addresses to the children of Israel is on the subject of idol worship. They were bound for a land inhabited by idolaters and the leader feared the influence which the natives would exert on his people. It was a fear which, as we shall see, was only too well founded. Hence arose those commands for the treatment of the natives of Canaan which seem to us excessively harsh and cruel. Amalek, for example, the hereditary enemy, was to be destroyed root and branch. We must, of course, judge those commands by the laws and methods of warfare which existed in those days. But the reason given by Moses for those commands, as well as for the solemn and oft-repeated prohibition against intermarriage with the nations of Canaan, was their idolatry. For idolatry was the gravest sin of all, all other sins springing from it. The worship of idols was accompanied by impure and cruel rites, including human sacrifice. It dulled the moral perceptions, for the idols cared nothing about justice and righteousness, and how could the worshiper be expected to be better than his gods?



THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

In this ark were kept the two stone tablets on which were engraved the Ten Commandments. The figures surmounting the ark are the Cherubim.

Among the religious ordinances should be included those which prescribe what is clean and what is unclean, although their aim is to regulate the private conduct of the individual in the direction of hygienic living. The most important of these have to do with sexual purity on which great stress is laid, for the reason that sexual impurity was rampant among the other nations. "After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do; and after the doings of the Land of Canaan, whither I shall bring you, shall ye not do," says Moses in the name of God. "Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things; for in all these the nations are defiled, which I cast out from before you."

The same aim of personal purity and hygienic living underlies the dietary laws which prescribe that, of animals, only those that are cloven-footed and chew their cud, and of fishes, only those that have fins and scales, may be eaten. Out of the command, not "to boil a kid in the milk of its mother," have been evolved all those later laws having to do with "milk diet" and "meat diet" and ordering a strict separation between the two.

We may also include among the religious laws those that bear on the Sabbath and the festivals, although as we have seen, they have, in addition, great social and national importance. The observance of the Sabbath is stressed fully as much in the Mosaic code as the prohibition against idolatry. The day of the new moon, the first of the lunar month, was set down as a minor festival which did not require rest from work. The three leading festivals of the year were the Passover in the early spring, the Feast of Weeks in the early summer, and the Feast of Booths in the early fall. Those were the three occasions when every man of the nation was required

to present himself before the sanctuary of the Lord. They are sometimes referred to as the "three pilgrimages."

In the meaning that has been attached to these festivals, each one represents a mingling of the memory of an historic event with a definite season of the agricultural year. In Canaan, each one of them became associated with a definite stage of the harvest. Thus Pesach or Passover, of which the unleavened bread or *matzoh* is so prominent a feature, commemorates the hasty departure from Egypt; but, at the same time, it marks for the shepherd the season of the birth of the new flock, and for the farmer the time when the first produce of the land begins to appear. Shabuoth, or the Feast of Weeks, commemorates the proclamation of the Ten Words at Sinai; but it also coincides with the ripening of the harvest. The third "pilgrimage festival," Succoth, the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles, is in memory of the days of desert wandering when the people lived in booths or tents, while, for the farmer, it marked the season of the vintage, the ingathering of the fruits of the harvest. The Feast of Tabernacles was fixed for the fifteenth day of Tishri, the

THE HIGH PRIEST IN HIS VESTMENTS

The robe was known as the *ephod*. The breastplate (Hebrew, *choshen*) consisted of twelve precious stones with the name of one of the tribes of Israel engraved on each.

seventh month of the year, if we count Nissan, the month of the Passover festival, as the first. In time, however, Tishri came to be regarded as the first month of the religious year, and the first day of Tishri was established for the observance of Rosh Hashanah or New Year. Ten days later came the solemn Day of Atonement or Yom Kippur, for which the Mosaic code prescribed the peculiar ceremony of sending the scapegoat into the wilderness as the bearer of the people's sins.

The Laws "between Man and His Neighbor."

We come now to those laws of the code which concern the relations between "a man and his neighbor," and which may be regarded as elaborations of the last five of the Ten Commandments. They include both civil and criminal laws. They prescribe punishments as well as indemnities to individuals for injuries. The murderer must suffer death, but he who kills by accident may find refuge from the blood avenger (see p. 210) in special cities set aside for the purpose. For, although the laws were designed for a community leading a settled life and subject to police and judicial regulation, the legislator was well aware that the customs of the desert would not be easily relinquished. The law of the desert may be recognized also in the provision of "eye for eye, tooth for tooth," a provision which has not been taken literally, but has been interpreted to mean that the injured person must be fully compensated.

The code proceeds to impose penalties on those who violate the Seventh Commandment forbidding adultery, and on those who are guilty of theft. Special solicitude is shown for the cause of the poor man in matters

of justice, although he is not to receive favored treatment merely because he is poor. Justice must be strictly impartial. But the judges must not receive gifts, "for a gift blindeth them that have sight and perverteth the words of the righteous." There are laws also for the protection of the poor against the usurer. "If thou lend money to any of My people even to the poor with thee, thou shalt not be to him as a creditor; neither shall ye lay upon him interest. If thou at all take thy neighbor's garment to pledge, thou shalt restore it unto him by that

Underwood and Underwood.

THE WILDERNESS OF SINAI

This picture conveys some impression of the desolateness of the regions through which the children of Israel wandered.

the sun goeth down; for that is his only covering, it is his garment for his skin; wherein shall he sleep?"

In fact, the most remarkable and outstanding feature of the Mosaic code is to be found in those laws which are designed for the protection of the weak: the widow and the orphan, the poor man and the stranger. Many of them are not laws in the strict or narrow sense of the word, with punishments laid down for the offender. Rather are they moral precepts enjoining kindness and mutual help. A man must come to the aid even of his personal enemy in emergencies. "If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under its burden, thou shalt forbear to pass by him; thou shalt surely release it with him." The widow, the orphan and the stranger are the special wards of God. The warning against oppressing them is constantly repeated. "Ye shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise — for if they cry at all unto Me I will surely hear their cry — My wrath shall wax hot and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows and your children fatherless." In the case of the stranger, also, the inspired lawgiver never tires of warning and exhorting his people. "And a stranger shalt thou not wrong, neither shalt thou oppress him; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt." "Love ye therefore the stranger, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt."

Those laws or precepts, in other words, are filled with the spirit of what is to-day called social justice. The same spirit animates the laws that deal with slavery. Of course, a distinction is made between Hebrew slaves and those of other nations. But, in view of the universal prevalence and cruelties of the institution of slavery, and in view, moreover, of its duration far into modern times,

the provisions of the law are significant. The Hebrew slave must not be compelled to serve his master longer than six years: in the seventh he must be given his freedom. "And when thou lettest him go free from thee, thou shalt not let him go empty: thou shalt furnish him

AN OASIS IN THE SINAI DESERT

The extraordinary fertility of this spot is due to several springs of water in its immediate neighborhood. It was in places like these that the children of Israel encamped on their journey through the deserts of the Sinai Peninsula.

liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy threshing floor, and out of thy winepress." And if the slave, out of attachment to his master and his household, refuses the freedom to which he is entitled, "then shalt thou take an awl and thrust it through his ear and into the door, and he shall be thy bondman forever." Thus was stigmatized the man who did not prefer his freedom to the comfort and security of his master's household. And

it is obvious that only in a society where humane treatment of slaves prevailed, would such a law be at all necessary.

Finally, the most interesting of all the laws in the Mosaic code that are social in character, are those which provide for the Sabbatical and Jubilee years. The first was to occur every seventh year when the land must lie fallow and the farmer must neither sow nor reap. Whatever the soil yielded of itself should be free to all. All debts which one Hebrew owed another were to be cancelled. The Jubilee year was to occur at the end of seven sabbatical cycles or every fiftieth year. "And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof; it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family." In that year, in other words, every Hebrew slave was to be set free whether his term of six years had expired or not. In that year, further, all land which had been sold or otherwise alienated was to be restored to the original owner or his heirs.

Social philosophers have been deeply impressed by the laws of the Sabbatical and Jubilee years, particularly the second. The first is believed to have been instituted in order to prevent the soil from being exhausted through continuous cultivation. The second clearly has for its object to check the tendency which has been observed in every society: the rise of a small class of landed proprietors over a large class of landless serfs. To this tendency have been ascribed most of the social and economic evils from which humanity has always suffered. The Sabbatical and Jubilee years could only be intended, of course, for a settled and agricultural people. Moses,

who enacts them for the children of Israel still encamped before Sinai, enjoins their observance "when ye come into the land which I give you."

Six centuries after the promulgation of the Torah at Sinai, when the children of Israel were dwelling in Canaan, a book was found in their Temple at Jerusalem where all the laws of Moses are restated in passionate words by the peerless leader. This was the book now called Deuteronomy. To convey the underlying spirit of justice and equity which animates the Mosaic code, we quote from this book the following:

When thou dost lend thy neighbor any manner of loan, thou shalt not go into his house to fetch his pledge. Thou shalt stand without, and the man to whom thou dost lend shall bring forth the pledge without unto thee. And if he be a poor man, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge; thou shalt surely restore to him the pledge when the sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his garment, and bless thee; and it shall be righteousness unto thee before the LORD thy God.

Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates. In the same day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it; lest he cry against thee unto the LORD, and it be sin in thee.

The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers; every man shall be put to death for his own sin.

Thou shalt not pervert the justice due to the stranger, or to the fatherless; nor take the widow's raiment to pledge. But thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee thence; therefore I command thee to do this thing.

When thou reapest thy harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go back to fetch it; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the

widow; that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thy hands.

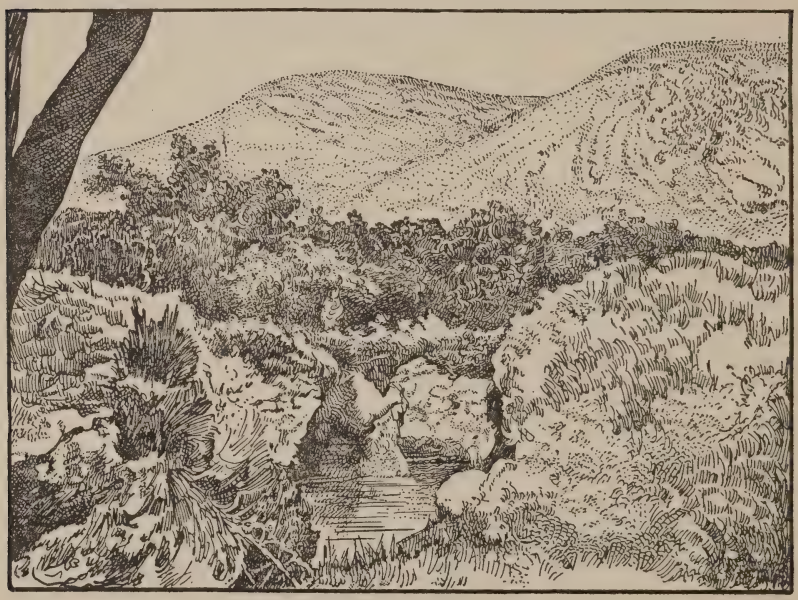
When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it after thee; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt; therefore I command thee to do this thing.

§4. *The Journey Is Resumed, and, after Many and Long Trials, the Hebrews Conquer the Lands East of the Jordan Where Moses Is "Gathered to His Fathers."*

TAKING up again the thread of the journey through the rocks and wastes of the Sinai Peninsula, as recorded in the Bible, we read how, in the second month of the second year from the departure from Egypt, the children of Israel lifted their encampment before Mount Sinai and plunged into the desert of Paran. Moses proceeded to organize his armed forces, placing a commander over the contingent of each tribe. Previously he had appointed civil officers over the people to assist him in the work of administering justice.

The hardships and dangers of the road recommenced, as well as the trials and sorrows of the leader. His people were like timid and pampered children. His strength was worn down by their endless complaining. Now they grew tired of the manna and demanded meat. "We remember the fish which we were wont to eat in Egypt for nought," they wailed, "the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic." And Moses in his grief implored God to put an end to his life. "Have I conceived all this people?" he cried

to God, "Have I brought them forth that Thou shouldst say unto me: Carry them in thy bosom as a nursing-father carrieth the sucking child unto the land which Thou didst swear unto their fathers?" And not only did they mutter and grumble, but once there was a serious rebellion. A considerable number of leading men,



THE OASIS OF KADESH-BARNEA

This spot, in the north of the Sinai Peninsula, was the principal resting place of the children of Israel in their wanderings.

at the head of whom was Korah of the tribe of Levi, rose up and challenged the authority of Moses and Aaron. The revolt failed, Korah and his accomplices, according to the account, being swallowed up in an earthquake.

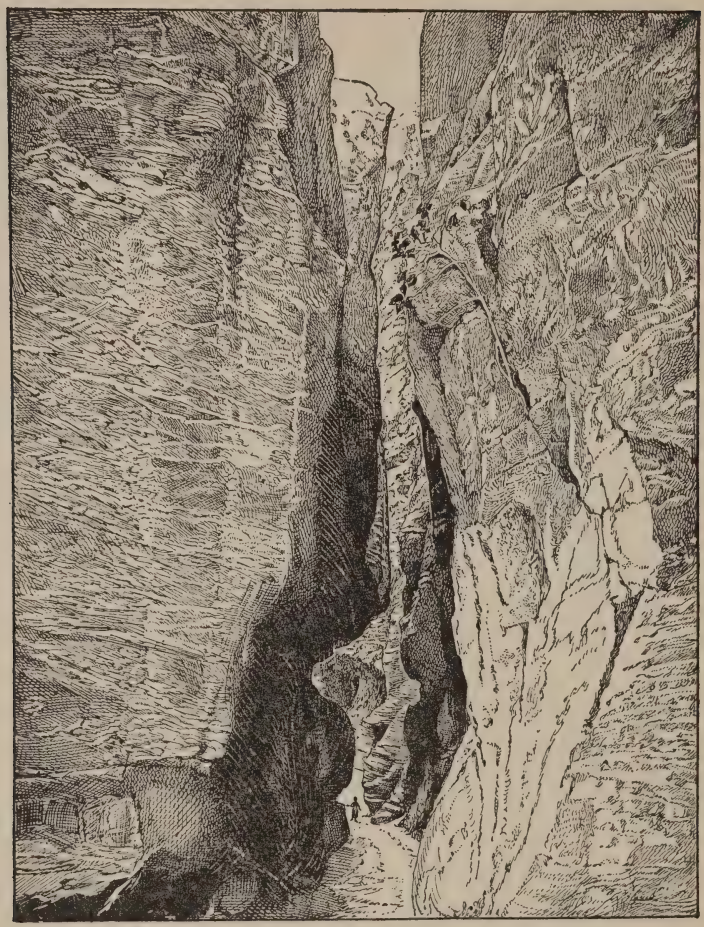
The northward journey continued and at last the host encamped at the oasis of Kadesh-barnea, in the Desert of Shur on the edge of Canaan. The leader

judged that it was time to strike. "Go up," said he to Israel, "take possession, as the Lord, the God of thy fathers, hath spoken unto thee; fear not, neither be dismayed." But first, a group of twelve men, one from each tribe, was sent forward to spy out the land. They penetrated as far as the brook Eshcol north of Hebron, but the report they brought back was alarming. The land itself they had found "flowing with milk and honey," but the inhabitants were giants and "the cities are fortified and very great." Only two of the scouts, Caleb and Joshua, urged the people not to fear and counseled an immediate attack. But the former slaves were dismayed. Caleb and Joshua were nearly stoned.

Moses now made a drastic decision. This horde of slaves, he concluded, was not fit to possess the Promised Land. They must all die in the wilderness, and their children, reared in the freedom of the desert, shall accomplish the task. On hearing their leader's verdict, the people repented of their cowardice, and, now against his advice, they moved forward and suffered a disastrous defeat at the hands of the Amorites.

The desert wandering was resumed. They moved south again and roamed for many years through the Desert of Zin, almost as far as the Gulf of Akaba. They journeyed from one encampment to another and the years passed by. At last forty years were gone since the exodus from Egypt. It was the new generation that Moses was now leading. Again he stood with his hosts at Kadesh-barnea on the border of Edom.

The leader asked the king of Edom for permission to pass through his territory. "Let us pass, I pray thee, through thy land," ran his message to the king, "We will not pass through field or through vineyard, neither



THE ENTRANCE TO PETRA

Petra was the capital of Edom located near Mount Hor. Its name is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *Sela,* meaning "rock," by which the place was known to the Hebrews.

will we drink of the water of the wells; we will go along the king's highway, we will not turn aside to the right hand nor to the left, until we have passed thy border." For the people of Edom were descended from Esau, brother of Jacob, and the children of Israel looked upon

their land as inviolate. They were resolved in the same way to respect the territory of Moab and Ammon, for the people of those lands sprang from Lot, the nephew of Abraham. The ties of kinship are sacred to a desert people.

But Edom refused permission. The king replied: "Thou shalt not pass through me, lest I come out with the sword against thee." So they moved south and skirted the borders of Edom and Moab.

Farther north, ruled an Amorite king by the name of Sihon, and his capital was Heshbon. Of him also passage was requested. Sihon refused to let them pass,

AMORITES

As pictured on an Egyptian sculpture. The nose and beard stamp them as Semites. They were an aggressive, warlike nation.

but toward the Amorite they felt no obligations. In a battle near Jahaz, the children of Israel routed him and possessed themselves of all his territory from the River Arnon to the Jabbok.

So the conquest had begun, although it was still confined to the lands east of the Jordan. The next ruler to feel the might of the newcomers was Og, the king of Bashan. In a battle at Edrei, the modern Derah, he was utterly defeated, and all his territory as far as Mount Hermon fell into the hands of the conquerors.

Underwood and Underwood.

MOUNT NEBO

From the summit of this mountain Moses looked out upon the Promised Land just before he died.

A great fear fell upon all the neighboring lands. Said Balak, king of Moab, to the Midianites: "Now will this multitude lick up all that is round about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field." He thought he could do more against them with magic than with weapons. So he asked the magician Balaam to curse them. Tradition has preserved a remarkable story about

this magician. The tale bears the fantastic qualities of the desert and its strange dream-like mirages. Try as he would, Balaam could not curse the children of Israel. All the curses in his mouth became transformed into blessings.

It was excellent pasture land which the children of Israel had conquered from the Arnon to Mount Hermon. The tribes of Reuben and Gad and part of the tribe of Manasseh asked permission of the leader to settle there. Moses granted it on condition that the fighting men of those tribes should join the others in the impending invasion of the lands west of the Jordan, "until the Lord give rest unto your brethren, as unto you, and they also possess the land which the Lord your God giveth them beyond the Jordan."

Now the day arrived when the leader was to be gathered to his fathers. His weary feet were not to step upon the soil of the Promised Land. For forty years he had toiled and suffered with his people, a grand and lonely figure, humble and sublime. He had seen the old generation die; he had taught and inspired the new. And now from Mount Nebo, one of the summits of Moab, he could only gaze out upon the land, the goal of all his wanderings and sufferings. And the mighty soul took flight from the wearied body; his soul, says the legend, took flight from his body with a kiss.

Unknown is the grave of the incomparable leader; for the people might have made the place an object of worship, and that would have been a wrong to his spirit. For in all the majesty of his greatness, his most shining quality is expressed in the following words of the Bible:

"Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men that were upon the face of the earth."

The first and greatest of the prophets of Israel was no more, but, like a beacon, the lonely figure on Mount Nebo has illumined the steep and stony road of his people's destiny.

TOPIC THREE: LITERATURE

1. THE REVELATION AT MOUNT SINAI

(Exodus 19–20 [14])

THE passage that follows contains the Ten Commandments preceded by an account of the circumstances surrounding their promulgation. The exalted character as well as the vast importance of these Words are impressed upon the people by two means: first, by the acts of spiritual self-purification which they are commanded to perform, and second, by the awe-inspiring natural phenomena with which the proclamation from Mount Sinai is accompanied. The account leaves an indelible impression of terror and grandeur.

The Ten Commandments, representing the constitution of the Jewish People, which they received under such prodigious circumstances, appeal to the thoughtful mind as the inevitable law of purity and justice.

THE PREPARATIONS

IN THE third month after the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai. And when they were departed from Rephidim, and were come to the wilderness of Sinai, they encamped in the wilderness; and there Israel encamped before the mount.

And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying: "Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel: Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto Myself. Now therefore, if ye will hearken unto My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be Mine own treasure from among all peoples; for all the earth is Mine; and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a

holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel."

And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which the LORD commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said: "All that the LORD hath spoken we will do." And Moses reported the words of the people unto the LORD. And the LORD said unto Moses: "Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and may also believe thee forever. Go unto the people, and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their garments, and be ready against the third day; for the third day the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai. And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying: Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it; whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death; no hand shall touch him, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether it be beast or man, it shall not live; when the ram's horn soundeth long, they shall come up to the mount." And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and sanctified the people; and they washed their garments. And he said unto the people: "Be ready against the third day."

And it came to pass on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of a horn exceeding loud; and all the people that were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. Now Mount Sinai was altogether on smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the horn waxed louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by a voice.

And the LORD came down upon Mount Sinai, to the top of the mount; and the LORD called Moses to the top of the mount; and Moses went up. And the LORD said unto Moses: "Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the LORD to gaze, and many of them perish. And let the priests also, that come

near to the LORD, sanctify themselves, lest the LORD break forth upon them."

And Moses said unto the LORD: "The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai; for Thou didst charge us, saying: Set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it." And the LORD said unto him: "Go, get thee down, and thou shalt come up, thou, and Aaron with thee; but let not the priests and the people break through to come up unto the LORD, lest He break forth upon them." So Moses went down unto the people, and told them.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

And God spoke all these words, saying:

I am the LORD thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.[1] Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor any manner of likeness, of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down unto them, nor serve them; for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children[2] unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto the thousandth generation of them that love Me and keep My commandments.

Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain;[3] for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is a sabbath unto the LORD thy God, in it thou shalt not do any manner of work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day; wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

[1] *i.e.*, beside Me.
[2] *i.e.*, punishing the children for the sins of the fathers.
[3] *i.e.*, falsely, or from a low motive.

Honor [4] thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

Thou shalt not murder.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Thou shalt not steal.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house; thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's.

2. THE SIN OF THE GOLDEN CALF

(EXODUS 32 [1-34])

THE story of the golden calf presents a contrast of extraordinary dramatic power with the account of the giving of the Ten Commandments — one of those contrasts of which the authors of the Bible were such perfect masters. As against the self-consecration and the swift leap towards spiritual exaltation of the event before the mountain, we have here a dismal picture of reaction and spiritual degradation. How tragically frail is the human spirit! How it must cling to something it can see and touch! Moses has gone up into the mountain. Moses is nowhere in sight. "We know not what is become of him," the people moan. "Up," they cry to the timid priest, "make us a god who shall go before us." Not even the flames of Sinai could burn the taint of Egypt out of their souls. In the mind of mankind the golden calf has become the symbol of all that is weak and low and false.

AND when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him: "Up, make us a god who shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we know not what is become of him."

And Aaron said unto them "Break off the golden rings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me." And all the people broke off the golden rings which were in their ears, and brought them unto

[4] The Hebrew word for *to honor* means to serve and obey as well as to respect.

Aaron. And he received it at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, and made it a molten calf; and they said: "This is thy god, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."

And when Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said: "To-morrow shall be a feast to the LORD." And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to make merry.

And the LORD spoke unto Moses: "Go, get thee down; for thy people, that thou broughtest up out of the land of Egypt, have dealt corruptly; they have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten calf, and have worshiped it, and have sacrificed unto it, and said: This is thy god, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." And the LORD said unto Moses: "I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiff-necked people. Now therefore let Me alone, that My wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them; and I will make of thee a great nation."

And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said: "LORD, why doth Thy wrath wax hot against Thy people, that Thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, saying: For evil did He bring them forth, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from Thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against Thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Thy servants, to whom Thou didst swear by Thine own self, and saidst unto them: I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it forever."

And the LORD repented of the evil which He said He would do unto His people.

And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, with the two tables of the testimony in his hand; tables that were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written. And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables.

And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses: "There is a noise of war in the camp." And he said: "It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome, but the noise of them that sing do I hear."

And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing; and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and broke them beneath the mount. And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt it with fire, and ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it.

And Moses said unto Aaron: "What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought a great sin upon them?" And Aaron said: "Let not the anger of my lord wax hot; thou knowest the people, that they are set on evil. So they said unto me: Make us a god, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we know not what is become of him. And I said unto them: Whosoever hath any gold, let them break it off; so they gave it me; and I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf."

And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people: "Ye have sinned a great sin; and now I will go up unto the LORD, peradventure I shall make atonement for your sins."

And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said: "Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them a god of gold. Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written." [5]

And the LORD said unto Moses: "Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book. And now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee; behold, Mine angel shall go before thee; nevertheless in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them."

[5] *i.e.*, erase my name from the "book of the living"; kill me.

3. THE SABBATICAL AND JUBILEE YEARS

(LEVITICUS * 25 1-28)

FOR a discussion of the significance of the Sabbatical and Jubilee Years *see p. 141.* *Most of the enactment which follows is devoted to the Jubilee year, and it becomes clear that this institution was intended as a sort of social purgative, when the social body would be cleansed of various inequalities, hardships and injustices accumulated during the preceding forty-nine years. Most of the evils which the Jubilee Year is aimed to remedy have to do with land tenure and slavery. It is doubtful if the Jubilee was ever observed in all its provisions. The Sabbatical year, however, is known to have been strictly observed from the period of Ezra and Nehemiah (about 440* B.C.E.*).*

AND the LORD spoke unto Moses in Mount Sinai, saying: Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them: When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the

* The contents of Leviticus, the third book of the Bible, are almost entirely legal, and its name, signifying "the Levitical Book," arises from the fact that it deals principally with the duties of the priests and Levites. The Hebrew name for the book is *Wa-yikra,* the word with which it opens and which means: "And He (the Lord) called (unto Moses)."

Leviticus may be divided into three parts. The first (Chaps. 1–7) contains the laws of sacrifice or offerings, such as peace offerings, sin offerings, etc. The second (Chaps. 8–16) consists chiefly of laws of purification, distinguishing clean animals, which may be eaten, from unclean animals, which may not, and laying down laws of a hygienic character to insure personal cleanliness and purity. The third part (Chaps. 17–26), known as the "Holiness Code," consists of moral injunctions, ritualistic commands, and warnings against the unclean practices of other nations. "Ye shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy," is the keynote of this section.

The following selections from Leviticus are recommended for additional reading:

a. The Consecration of Aaron and his Sons (Chaps. 8–9).

b. Clean and Unclean Animals (Chap. 11).

c. The Sabbath and Festivals (Chap. 23).

d. Rewards and Punishments (Chap. 26).

land keep a sabbath unto the LORD.[6] Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the produce thereof. But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a sabbath unto the LORD; thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of itself of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, and the grapes of thy undressed vine thou shalt not gather; it shall be a year of solemn rest for the land. And the sabbath produce[7] of the land shall be for food for you: for thee, and for thy servant and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant and for the settler by thy side that sojourn with thee; and for thy cattle, and for the beasts that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be for food.

And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and there shall be unto thee the days of seven sabbaths of years, even forty and nine years. Then shalt thou make proclamation with the blast of the horn on the tenth day of the seventh month; in the day of atonement shall ye make proclamation with the horn throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof; it shall be a jubilee[8] unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you; ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of the undressed vines. For it is a jubilee; it shall be holy unto you; ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field. In this year of jubilee ye shall return every man unto his possession.

And if thou sell aught unto thy neighbor, or buy of thy neighbor's hand, ye shall not wrong one another. According to the number of years after the jubilee thou shalt buy of thy neighbor, and according unto the number of years of the crops he shall sell

[6] The Sabbatical year is thus conceived as an extension of the institution of the Sabbath, imposed upon the land itself.

[7] *i.e.*, the produce which comes of itself, without cultivation.

[8] Note that the English word "jubilee" is derived from the Hebrew *yovel*, the original meaning of which is "ram" or "ram's horn." The Jubilee year was proclaimed by blowing the ram's horn.

unto thee. According to the multitude of the years thou shalt increase the price thereof, and according to the fewness of the years thou shalt diminish the price of it; for the number of crops doth he sell unto thee.[9]

And ye shall not wrong one another; but thou shalt fear thy God; for I am the LORD your God. Wherefore ye shall do My statutes, and keep Mine ordinances and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety. And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat until ye have enough, and dwell therein in safety.

And if ye shall say: "What shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we may not sow, nor gather in our increase," then I will command My blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth produce for the three[10] years. And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat of the produce, the old store; until the ninth year, until her produce come in, ye shall eat the old store. And the land shall not be sold in perpetuity; for the land is Mine; for ye are strangers and settlers with Me. And in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land.

If thy brother be waxen poor, and sell some of his possession, then shall his kinsman that is next unto him come, and shall redeem that which his brother hath sold.[11] And if a man have no one to redeem it, and he be waxen rich and finds sufficient means to redeem it; then let him count the years of the sale thereof, and restore the overplus unto the man to whom he sold it; and he shall return unto his possession. But if he have not sufficient means to get it back for himself, then that which he hath sold shall remain in the hand of him that hath bought it until the year of jubilee; and in the jubilee it shall go out, and he shall return unto his possession.

[9] The legislator makes it clear that land cannot be bought or sold, but only the use of the land, or a certain number of crops, the number depending on the proximity of the Jubilee year.

[10] *i.e.*, for the sixth, seventh and eighth years, since what is sown the eighth year will not be ready until the fall or the beginning of the ninth year.

[11] See note 63 p. 272.

4. STORY OF THE TWELVE SPIES

(NUMBERS * 13–14[10])

THE desert generation, the generation of former slaves, is well represented by these twelve spies, only two of whom, Caleb and Joshua, are men of courage and good heart. The others are timid souls who infect the entire camp with their fears. Observe how the report they bring back wavers between greed and dread, for they are lured by the richness

* Numbers, the fourth book of the Bible, is so called because the first chapter records that Moses took a census or numbered the people to discover what military strength each tribe could muster. The Hebrew name for the book is *Be-midbar,* meaning "in the wilderness" and derived from the opening words: "And the LORD spoke unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai."

The book covers the events from the construction of the Tabernacle through the conquest of the Transjordanian regions under Moses, a period of a little more than thirty-eight years. The book combines history with legislation. After the census, there is an elaborate account of the organization of the people, both for marching and camping, and of the organization of the Levites for the service of the Tabernacle (Chaps. 1–4).

The Israelites then resume their journey. There follows an account of the incidents at Kadesh, of which the most important were the mission of the twelve spies (Chaps. 13–14), and the revolt of Korah (Chap. 16). The Israelites wander forth again and, after being denied passage through Edom, they march around its borders, and penetrate into Moab and Gilead which they conquer. Connected with these conquests is the story of Balaam and Balak (Chaps. 22–24). The book continues with the account of another census taken by Moses on the Plain of Moab (Chap. 26), his appointment of Joshua to succeed him (Chap. 27[12-23]), and the petition of Reuben, Gad and half-Manasseh to settle in the conquered territory (Chap. 32). Interspersed with the recital of these events are numerous legislative enactments, of a ritualistic as well as of a personal and social character, such as the law of Nazirites (Chap. 6[1-21]), punishments for violating the Sabbath (Chap. 15[32-36]), the cities of refuge (Chap. 35[9-34]), etc., etc.

The following selections from Numbers are recommended for additional reading:

a. The Rebellion of Korah (Chap. 16[1-35]).
b. The Only Sin of Moses (Chap. 20[1-13]).
c. The Embassy to Edom (Chap. 20[14-21]).
d. The Petition of the Tribes of Reuben and Gad (Chap. 32[1-33]).
e. The Cities of Refuge (Chap. 35[9-34]).

of the land and alarmed, at the same time, by the strength of the inhabitants which, in their panicky state, they greatly exaggerate.

AND the Lord spoke unto Moses, saying: "Send thou men, that they may spy out the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel; of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a prince among them." And Moses sent them from the wilderness of Paran [12] according to the commandment of the LORD; all of them men who were heads of the children of Israel.

And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them: "Get you up here into the South, and go up into the mountains; and see the land, what it is; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they are strong or weak, whether they are few or many; and what the land is that they dwell in, whether it is good or bad; and what cities they are that they dwell in, whether in camps, or in strongholds; and what the land is, whether it is fat or lean, whether there is wood therein, or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land." (Now the time was the time of the first ripe grapes.[13])

So they went up, and spied out the land from the wilderness of Zin unto Rehob, at the entrance of Hamath.[14] And they went up into the South, and came unto Hebron; and Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the children of Anak,[15] were there.

And they came unto the valley of Eshcol,[16] and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bore it upon a pole between two; they took also of the pomegranates, and of the figs. That place was called the valley of Eshcol, because of the cluster which the children of Israel cut down from

[12] The Wilderness of Paran lay directly south of the Negeb or southern plateau of Palestine.

[13] *i.e.*, about the end of July or early in August.

[14] The Wilderness of Zin was located east of Paran; Rehob and Hamath were in the far north of Palestine.

[15] The children of Anak, or the Anakim, lived in the neighborhood of Hebron. They were men of large stature and were believed to be descended from a race of giants.

[16] A few miles north of Hebron.

thence.[17] And they returned from spying out the land at the end of forty days.

And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land.

And they told him, and said: "We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. Howbeit the people that dwell in the land are fierce, and the cities are fortified, and very great; and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. Amalek dwelleth in the land of the South; and the Hittite, and the Jebusite, and the Amorite dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanite dwelleth by the sea, and along by the side of the Jordan."

And Caleb stilled the people toward Moses,[18] and said: "We should go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it." But the men that went up with him said: "We are not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we."

And they spread an evil report of the land which they had spied out unto the children of Israel, saying: "The land, through which we have passed to spy it out, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof;[19] and all the people that we saw in it are men of great stature. And there we saw the Nephilim, the sons of Anak, who come of the Nephilim;[20] and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight."

And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron; and the whole congregation said unto them: "Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would we had died in this wilderness! And wherefore doth the LORD bring us unto this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will be a prey; were it not

[17] *Eshcol* means cluster.

[18] *i.e.*, Caleb silenced their complaining.

[19] Here the spies, in order to dishearten the people still further, contradict their first report, and say that the land eats up its inhabitants, that is, it is dry and barren.

[20] *i.e.*, the giants.

better for us to return into Egypt?" And they said one to another: "Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt."

Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were of them that spied out the land, rent their clothes.[21] And they spoke unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying: "The land, which we passed through to spy it out, is an exceeding good land. If the LORD delight in us, then He will bring us into this land, and give it unto us — a land which floweth with milk and honey. Only rebel not against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us,[22] their defense is removed from over them, and the LORD is with us; fear them not." But all the congregation bade stone them with stones, when the glory of the LORD appeared in the tent of meeting unto all the children of Israel.[23]

5. STORY OF BALAAM THE MAGICIAN

(NUMBERS 22²–24)

IT IS difficult to analyze the strange fascination of this story of a magician who is hired to curse Israel, but who, owing to an irresistible inner compulsion, blesses him instead. The story produces the effect of a phantasmagoria, of a desert mirage. The incident of Balaam's encounter with the angel, and the grotesque behavior of the ass, reads like a fantastic dream or nightmare.

AND Balak the son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites. And Moab was sore afraid of the people, because they were many; and Moab was overcome with dread because of the children of Israel. And Moab said unto the elders of Midian: "Now will this multitude lick up all that is round about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field." And Balak the son of Zippor was king of Moab at that time.

[21] Rending the clothes is still a sign of mourning among Jews.

[22] *i.e.*, we shall consume or destroy them.

[23] God then declares to Moses His purpose to cause all that slavish generation to perish in the wilderness.

BALAAM IS BIDDEN BY BALAK TO CURSE ISRAEL

And he sent messengers unto Balaam the son of Beor, to Pethor, which is by the River,[24] to the land of the children of his people, to call him, saying: "Behold, there is a people come out from Egypt; behold, they cover the face of the earth, and they abide over against me.[25] Come now therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people; for they are too mighty for me; peradventure I shall prevail, that we may smite them, and that I may drive them out of the land; for I know that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed."

And the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian departed with the rewards of divination in their hand; and they came unto Balaam, and spoke unto him the words of Balak. And he said unto them: "Lodge here this night, and I will bring you back word, as the Lord may speak unto me;" [26] and the princes of Moab abode with Balaam.

GOD FORBIDS HIM TO GO

And God came unto Balaam, and said: "What men are these with thee?" And Balaam said unto God: "Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, hath sent unto me (saying): Behold the people that is come out of Egypt, it covereth the face of the earth; now, come curse me them; peradventure I shall be able to fight against them, and shall drive them out." And God said unto Balaam: "Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people; for they are blessed."

And Balaam rose up in the morning, and said unto the princes of Balak: "Get you into your land; for the LORD refuseth to give me leave to go with you." And the princes of Moab rose up, and they went unto Balak, and said: "Balaam refuseth to come with us."

And Balak sent yet again princes, more, and more honorable than they. And they came to Balaam, and said to him: "Thus saith Balak the son of Zippor: Let nothing, I pray thee, hinder

[24] "The River," usually means the Euphrates; but the exact location of Balaam's home is uncertain.

[25] *i.e.*, they are encamped against me.

[26] In the night Balaam expects to learn in his dreams what he is to do.

thee from coming unto me; for I will promote thee unto very great honor, and whatsoever thou sayest unto me I will do; come therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people."

And Balaam answered and said unto the servants of Balak: "If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the LORD my God, to do any thing, small or great. Now therefore, I pray you, tarry ye also here this night, that I may know what the LORD will speak unto me more."

BIDDEN AGAIN, HE GOES AND MEETS AN ANGEL OF GOD

And God came unto Balaam at night, and said unto him: "If the men are come to call thee, rise up, go with them; but only the word which I speak unto thee, that shalt thou do." And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab.

And God's anger was kindled because he went; and the angel of the LORD placed himself in the way for an adversary against him. — Now he was riding upon his ass, and his two servants were with him. — And the ass saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, with his sword drawn in his hand; and the ass turned aside out of the way, and went into the field; and Balaam smote the ass, to turn her into the way.

Then the angel of the LORD stood in a hollow way between the vineyards, a fence being on this side, and a fence on that side. And the ass saw the angel of the LORD, and she thrust herself unto the wall, and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall; and he smote her again.

And the angel of the LORD went further, and stood in a narrow place, where was no way to turn either to the right hand or to the left. And the ass saw the angel of the LORD, and she lay down under Balaam; and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he smote the ass with his staff.

And the LORD opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam: "What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times?" And Balaam said unto the ass: "Because thou hast mocked me; I would there were a sword in my hand, for now I had killed thee." And the ass said unto Balaam: "Am not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden all thy life

long unto this day? Was I ever wont to do so unto thee?" And he said: "Nay."

Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, with his sword drawn in his hand; and he bowed his head, and fell on his face. And the angel of the LORD said unto him: "Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? Behold, I am come forth for an adversary, because thy way is contrary unto me; and the ass saw me, and turned aside before me these three times; unless she had turned aside from me, surely now I had even slain thee, and saved her alive."

And Balaam said unto the angel of the LORD: "I have sinned; for I knew not that thou stoodest in the way against me; now therefore, if it displease thee, I will get me back." And the angel of the LORD said unto Balaam: "Go with the men; but only the word that I shall speak unto thee, that thou shalt speak." So Balaam went with the princes of Balak.

KING BALAK GOES FORTH TO MEET HIM

And when Balak heard that Balaam was come, he went out to meet him unto Ir-moab, which is on the border of Arnon, which is in the utmost part of the border. And Balak said unto Balaam: "Did I not earnestly send unto thee to call thee? wherefore camest thou not unto me? am I not able indeed to promote thee to honor?" And Balaam said unto Balak: "Lo, I am come unto thee; have I now any power at all to speak any thing? the word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak."

And Balaam went with Balak, and they came unto Kiriath-huzoth. And Balak sacrificed oxen and sheep, and sent to Balaam, and to the princes that were with him. And it came to pass in the morning that Balak took Balaam, and brought him up into Bamoth-baal, and he saw from thence the utmost part of the people.[27]

THEY OFFER SACRIFICES ON A HIGH PLACE

And Balaam said unto Balak: "Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven bullocks and seven rams." And Balak

[27] Balak brings Balaam to a height from which the encampment of Israel is visible, for the magician has to see his victim as he curses him.

did as Balaam had spoken; and Balak and Balaam offered on every altar a bullock and a ram. And Balaam said unto Balak: "Stand by thy burnt offering, and I will go; peradventure the LORD will come to meet me; and whatsoever He showeth me I will tell thee." And he went to a bare height.

And God met Balaam; and he said unto Him: "I have prepared the seven altars, and I have offered up a bullock and a ram on every altar." And the LORD put a word in Balaam's mouth, and said: "Return unto Balak, and thus thou shalt speak." And he returned unto him, and, lo, he stood by his burnt offering, he, and all the princes of Moab.

BALAAM BLESSES ISRAEL ONCE

And he took up his parable, and said:

From Aram Balak bringeth me,
The king of Moab from the mountains of the East:
"Come, curse me Jacob,
And come, execrate Israel."
How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed?
And how shall I execrate, whom the LORD hath not execrated?
For from the top of the rocks I see him,
And from the hills I behold him:
Lo, it is a people that shall dwell alone,
And shall not be reckoned among the nations.[28]
Who hath counted the dust of Jacob,[29]
Or numbered the stock of Israel?
Let me die the death of the righteous,
And let mine end be like his![30]

BALAK TRIES AGAIN

And Balak said unto Balaam: "What hast thou done unto me? I took thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast blessed them altogether." And he answered and said: "Must I not take heed to speak that which the LORD putteth in my mouth?" And Balak said unto him: "Come, I pray thee, with me unto another place, from whence thou mayest see them; thou shalt see

[28] *i.e.*, Israel shall be a nation apart, dedicated to the service of God.

[29] *i.e.*, the descendants of Jacob who are as the dust for multitude.

[30] Note the parallel lines, the distinguishing mark of Hebrew versification.

but the utmost part of them, and shalt not see them all; and curse me them from thence."

And he took him into the field of Zophim, to the top of Pisgah, and built seven altars, and offered up a bullock and a ram on every altar. And he said unto Balak: "Stand here by thy burnt offering, while I go toward a meeting yonder."[31] And the LORD met Balaam, and put a word in his mouth, and said: "Return unto Balak, and thus shalt thou speak." And he came to him, and, lo, he stood by his burnt offering, and the princes of Moab with him. And Balak said unto him: "What hath the LORD spoken?"

BALAAM BLESSES ISRAEL TWICE

And he took up his parable, and said:

Arise, Balak, and hear;
Give ear unto me, thou son of Zippor:
God is not a man, that He should lie;
Neither the son of man, that He should repent:
When He hath said, will He not do it?
Or when He hath spoken, will He not make it good?
Behold, I am bidden to bless;
And when He hath blessed, I cannot call it back.
None hath beheld iniquity in Jacob,
Neither hath one seen perverseness in Israel;
The LORD his God is with him,
And the shouting for the King is among them.
God who brought them forth out of Egypt
Is for them like the lofty horns of the wild ox.
For there is no enchantment with Jacob,
Neither is there any divination with Israel;[32]
Now is it said of Jacob and of Israel:
"What hath God wrought!"
Behold a people that riseth up as a lioness,
And as a lion doth he lift himself up;
He shall not lie down until he eat of the prey,
And drink the blood of the slain.

And Balak said unto Balaam: "Neither curse them at all nor bless them at all." But Balaam answered and said unto Balak: "Told not I thee, saying: All that the LORD speaketh, that I must do?"

[31] *i.e.*, while I go to meet the LORD in order to learn His will.

[32] *i.e.*, the magic arts cannot avail against Israel.

BALAK TRIES A THIRD TIME

And Balak said unto Balaam: "Come now, I will take thee unto another place; peradventure it will please God that thou mayest curse me them from thence." And Balak took Balaam unto the top of Peor, that looketh down upon the desert. And Balaam said unto Balak: "Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven bullocks and seven rams." And Balak did as Balaam had said, and offered up a bullock and a ram on every altar.

And when Balaam saw that it pleased the LORD to bless Israel, he went not, as at the other times, to meet with enchantments, but he set his face toward the wilderness. And Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel dwelling tribe by tribe; and the spirit of God came upon him.

BALAAM BLESSES ISRAEL THREE TIMES

And he took up his parable, and said:

The saying of Balaam the son of Beor,
And the saying of the man whose eye is opened;
The saying of him who heareth the words of God,
Who seeth the vision of the Almighty,
Fallen down, yet with opened eyes:[33]
How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob,
Thy dwellings, O Israel!
As valleys stretched out,
As gardens by the river-side;
As aloes planted of the LORD,
As cedars beside the waters;
Water shall flow from his branches,
And his seed shall be in many waters;[34]
And his king shall be higher than Agag,
And his kingdom shall be exalted.
God who brought him forth out of Egypt
Is for him like the lofty horns of the wild ox;
He shall eat up the nations that are his adversaries,
And shall break their bones in pieces,

[33] The preceding five lines describe the state of ecstasy in which Balaam finds himself. He is in a sort of trance. His eyes are open but he sees only "the vision of the Almighty," he hears only "the words of God."

[34] Balaam has described his vision of the land in which Israel shall dwell. Note the emphasis that is laid on the greatest boon of all: water.

And pierce them through with his arrows.
He couched, he lay down as a lion,
And as a lioness; who shall rouse him up?
Blessed be every one that blesseth thee,
And cursed be every one that curseth thee.

And Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam, and he smote his hands together; and Balak said unto Balaam: "I called thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast altogether blessed them these three times. Therefore now flee thou to thy place; I thought to promote thee unto great honor; but, lo, the LORD hath kept thee back from honor."

And Balaam said unto Balak: "Spoke I not also to thy messengers that thou didst send unto me, saying: If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the LORD, to do either good or bad of mine own mind; what the LORD speaketh, that will I speak? And now, behold, I go unto my people; come, and I will announce to thee what this people shall do to thy people in the end of days." [35]

BALAAM FORETELLS THE VICTORY OF ISRAEL

And he took up his parable, and said:

The saying of Balaam the son of Beor,
And the saying of the man whose eye is opened;
The saying of him who heareth the words of God,
And knoweth the knowledge of the Most High,
Who seeth the vision of the Almighty,
Fallen down, yet with opened eyes:
I see him, but not now;
I behold him, but not nigh;
There shall step forth a star [36] out of Jacob,
And a sceptre shall rise out of Israel,
And shall smite through the corners [37] of Moab,
And break down all the sons of Seth.[38]

And Balaam rose up, and went and returned to his place; and Balak also went his way.

[35] "The end of days" is a favorite expression of the prophets. It means, of course, the future as far as the vision of the seer is able to pierce it.

[36] A king is often compared to a star.

[37] The "corners" are the corners of the head, or the temples.

[38] Seth was perhaps the name of one of the tribes of Moab.

6. THE FAREWELL OF MOSES

(DEUTERONOMY* 8; 10^{12}–11^{21})

THE following passages from the Book of Deuteronomy illustrate the character of the Book as a whole. Deuteronomy consists of a restatement of the Mosaic code, called the "Book of the Covenant," plus four "Farewell Addresses" delivered by Moses to the new generation born in the wilder-

* Deuteronomy is the fifth book of the Bible and the last of the Five Books of Moses. These five books are known as the Pentateuch, a Greek word equivalent to the Hebrew *Chamisha Chumshe Torah,* meaning "The five-fifths (the whole) of the Torah or Law." The more frequent Hebrew name for these five books is *Chumash.* The Pentateuch is the first great division of the Bible.

Deuteronomy is a Greek word meaning "repetition of the Law." The name is appropriate, for the Book consists, among other things, of a restatement of the Laws occurring in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers. The Hebrew name of the Book is *Debarim* meaning "Words," taken from its opening verse which begins: "These are the words which Moses spoke unto all Israel beyond the Jordan."

Deuteronomy consists of four addresses delivered by Moses to his people just before he died and on the eve of their crossing the Jordan to conquer Canaan. The first address (Chaps. 1^{6}–4^{40}) begins with a recital of the marvelous events during the journey from Egypt and ends with a passionate appeal for loyalty to the Law of Sinai. The second (Chaps. 5–29) begins by expounding the basic belief of the Jewish faith: "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one," followed by a restatement of the Mosaic code, and concluding with an enumeration of the blessings for obeying its laws and the curses for disobeying them. The third oration of Moses (Chaps. 29–30) is another appeal to remain true to the Law of God, "to love the Lord thy God, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His ordinances." In the fourth and final discourse (Chaps. 31–33) are included the song of Moses beginning "Give ear, ye heavens, and I will speak," and the blessings he bestows on each tribe individually. These poems are followed by a brief account of his death (Chap. 34).

The following passages from Deuteronomy are recommended for additional reading:

a. Laws of Social Justice (Chap. $15^{1\text{-}18}$).
b. Laws of War (Chap. $20^{1\text{-}9}$).
c. The Third Oration of Moses (Chaps. 29–30).
d. The Song of Moses (Chap. 32).
e. The Blessing of Moses (Chap. 33).

ness and about to enter the Promised Land. The Book was discovered centuries later, in the reign of King Josiah, and its reading, as will be told, produced a powerful effect on the people and led to a religious revolution.

The style of Deuteronomy is unique. It is the style of oratory, mounting to flights of passionate eloquence which sometimes break into song. The great leader knows that his hour is at hand. He is about to turn over the leadership to Joshua and ascend Mount Nebo whence he knows he will never return. What lies in store for his people on the other side of the river? Unable to go with them, the leader's heart is rent with anxiety and longing. He pours out his spirit in a final effort to keep them true to the law of God.

With regard to the literary quality of Deuteronomy, the following statement by an eminent literary scholar† is illuminating:

> "When I was a beginner in literary studies, I recollect setting myself as an exercise to read through on three successive days, each at a single sitting, an oration of Demosthenes, one of Burke, and the Book of Deuteronomy. I would not be understood as recommending such comparisons of merit, but I well recollect the feeling I had at the time that neither of the other two rose to the oratorical level of the speeches of Moses."

ALL the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers.

And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God hath led thee these forty years in the wilderness, that He might afflict thee, to prove thee,[39] to know what was in thy heart, whether thou wouldst keep His commandments, or no. And He afflicted thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every thing that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live. Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years. And thou shalt consider in thy heart, that, as a

† Richard G. Moulton, professor of literary theory and interpretation in the University of Chicago.

[39] *i.e.*, to test you.

man chasteneth[40] his son, so the LORD thy God chasteneth thee.

And thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, to walk in His ways, and to fear Him. For the LORD thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths, springing forth in valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, and vines and fig trees and pomegranates; a land of olive trees and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack anything in it; a land whose stones are iron,[41] and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.[42] And thou shalt eat and be satisfied, and bless the LORD thy God for the good land which He hath given thee.

Beware lest thou forget the LORD thy God, in not keeping His commandments, and His ordinances, and His statutes, which I command thee this day; lest when thou hast eaten and art satisfied, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thy heart be lifted up,[43] and thou forget the LORD thy God, who brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; who led thee through the great and dreadful wilderness, wherein were serpents, fiery serpents,[44] and scorpions, and thirsty ground where was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint,[45] who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not; that He might afflict thee, and that He might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end; and thou say in thy heart: "My power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth." But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God, for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth; that He may establish His covenant which He swore unto thy fathers, as it is this day.

And it shall be, if thou shalt forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I fore-

[40] To chasten is to strengthen and purify by discipline.

[41] The black basalt stone of Palestine, an excellent building material, is still called by the Arabs "iron stone."

[42] Brass, or rather copper, was once mined in Edom and in Lebanon.

[43] *i.e.*, you will become arrogant.

[44] Fiery serpents were those whose sting caused inflammation.

[45] At Horeb, when the people complained of thirst, Moses smote the rock and a stream of water gushed out.

warn you this day that ye shall surely perish. As the nations that the LORD maketh to perish before you, so shall ye perish; because ye would not hearken unto the voice of the LORD your God.

And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul; to keep for thy good the commandments of the LORD, and His statutes, which I command thee this day? Behold, unto the LORD thy God belongeth the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, the earth, with all that therein is. Only the LORD had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and He chose their seed after them, even you, above all peoples, as it is this day.

For the LORD your God, He is God of gods, LORD of lords, the great God, the mighty, and the awful, who regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward.[46] He doth execute justice for the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment. Love ye therefore the stranger; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God; Him shalt thou serve; and to Him shalt thou cleave, and by His name shalt thou swear. He is thy glory, and He is thy God, that hath done for thee these great and tremendous things, which thine eyes have seen. Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons; and now the LORD thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude.

Therefore thou shalt love the LORD thy God, and keep His charge, and His statutes, and His ordinances, and His commandments, always. And know ye this day; for I speak not with your children that have not known, and that have not seen the chastisement of the LORD your God, His greatness, His mighty hand, and His outstretched arm, and His signs, and His works, which He did in the midst of Egypt unto Pharaoh the King of Egypt, and unto all his land; and what He did unto the army of Egypt, unto their horses, and to their chariots; how He made the water of the Red Sea to overflow them as they pursued after you, and how the LORD hath destroyed them unto this day; and what He did unto you in the wilderness, until ye came unto this place; and what He

[46] *i.e.*, He is the just judge, not influenced by the rank or station of persons, nor taking bribes.

did unto Dathan and Abiram,[47] the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben; how the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their households, and their tents, and every living substance that followed them, in the midst of all Israel; but your eyes have seen all the great work of the LORD which He did. Therefore shall ye keep all the commandment which I command thee this day, that ye may be strong, and go in and possess the land, whither ye go over to possess it; and that ye may prolong your days upon the land, which the LORD swore unto your fathers to give unto them and to their seed, a land flowing with milk and honey.

For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou didst sow thy seed, and didst water it with thy foot,[48] as a garden of herbs; but the land, whither ye go over to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water as the rain of heaven cometh down; a land which the LORD thy God careth for; the eyes of the LORD thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.

And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto My commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, that I will give the rain of your land in its season, the former rain and the latter rain,[49] that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil. And I will give grass in thy fields for thy cattle, and thou shalt eat and be satisfied.

Take heed to yourselves, lest your heart be deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them; and the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and He shut up the heaven, so that there shall be no rain, and the ground shall not yield her fruit; and ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you.

Therefore shall ye lay up these My words in your heart and in

[47] Dathan and Abiram had joined in the rebellion of Korah against Moses.

[48] *i.e.*, by means of a water wheel turned with the foot.

[49] The "former rain" fell in October and November, the "latter rain" in March and April. The crops of the country depend, of course, on the regularity of these rains.

your soul; and ye shall bind them for a sign upon your hand, and they shall be for frontlets between your eyes.[50] And ye shall teach them your children, talking of them, when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates;[51] that your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, upon the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers to give them, as the days of the heavens above the earth.[52]

7. THE DEATH OF MOSES

(DEUTERONOMY 34)

THE final message has been delivered, the last farewell has been spoken. Moses is ready to be gathered to his fathers. With majestic simplicity, the author of Deuteronomy presents the last scene in the epic life of Moses, "the servant of God."

AND Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho.

And the LORD showed him all the land, even Gilead as far as Dan; and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah as far as the hinder sea;[53] and the South, and the Plain, even the valley of Jericho the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar.

And the LORD said unto him: "This is the land which I swore unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying: I will give it unto thy seed; I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither."

[50] This passage is the basis for the phylacteries or *tephillin*, the small leather cases containing sheets of parchment inscribed with selections from the Books of Moses, in which Jews pray on the mornings of every week day.

[51] This passage is the basis for the *mezuzah*, the small metal case containing an inscription on parchment which Jews nail on the door-posts of their homes.

[52] *i.e.*, as long as the world will last.

[53] *i.e.*, the Mediterranean.

So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word [54] of the LORD. And he was buried in the valley in the land of Moab over against Beth-peor; and no man knoweth of his sepulcher unto this day.

And Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died; his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated. And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days; so the days of weeping in the mourning for Moses were ended.

And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him; and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the LORD commanded Moses.

And there hath not arisen a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face; in all the signs and the wonders, which the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land; and in all the mighty hand, and in all the great terror, which Moses wrought in the sight of all Israel.

[54] The Hebrew means literally *mouth*. Hence arose the legend that Moses died by the kiss of God.

TOPIC FOUR

Canaan and Its Conquest

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§ 1. *Led by Joshua, the Hebrews Begin the Conquest of Canaan with the Capture of the Fortresses of Jericho and Ai.*

§ 2. *Canaan Is a Fertile Land with Immense Variations in Topography and Climate. It Is the Natural Highway between Asia and Africa.*

§ 3. *The Inhabitants of Canaan, the Amorites and Canaanites, Borrowed Their Civilization from the Babylonians and the Egyptians.*

§ 4. *After Conquering the Land More or Less Completely, Joshua Divides It among the Tribes of the Children of Israel.*

TOPIC FOUR: LITERATURE

1. The Appointment of Joshua (*Joshua* 1).
2. The Story of the Two Spies (*Joshua* 2).
3. The Story of the Wily Gibeonites (*Joshua* 9).
4. The Defeat of the Amorites (*Joshua* 10^{1-14}).
5. Renewal of the Covenant by Joshua (*Joshua* 23–24^{28}).

TOPIC FOUR

Canaan and Its Conquest

§ 1. *Led by Joshua, the Hebrews Begin the Conquest of Canaan with the Capture of the Fortresses of Jericho and Ai.*

AT LAST the Promised Land lay before them. From the heights of Gilead the desert-weary children of Israel could, like Moses, gaze westward across the silver line of the Jordan upon the green beckoning hills of Judea. Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh had come into their inheritance; but most of the tribes were still landless, and they knew that they could come into possession only after a bitter struggle.

For the hills on the other side bristled with fortified cities. They were inhabited by nations who were skilled in the arts of warfare. Perched on the summits, those cities were easy to defend and hard to attack. And, although the cities were ruled each one by its own king, they would be sure to unite in order to repel the common danger.

But the Israelites were not dismayed. Their conquests east of the Jordan, where they had defeated the warlike Amorites and captured their cities, inspired them with confidence. And now there rose up among them a new leader, a man of great spirit and military prowess, eminently fitted for the business in hand. He was Joshua, son of Nun, of the strong tribe of Ephraim, one

CANAAN IN THE PERIOD OF THE CONQUEST

of the two tribes, the other being Manasseh, into which the sons of Joseph had become divided.

Joshua, to be exact, was not a new figure among the children of Israel. He was an old and seasoned warrior. He had fought in the old days against the Amalekites at Rephidim. Of the twelve scouts whom Moses had dispatched from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land (see p. 145), Joshua had been one of the two who had returned without being discouraged by what they had seen. Moses, at God's command, had, just before his death, appointed Joshua his successor. "And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands upon him."

As the Israelites looked across the Jordan valley from the heights of Gilead, they could see, lying at the foot of the hills on the other side, the city of Jericho. This strongly fortified city was the gateway to the land of Canaan. It was like the bottom landing of a stairway that winds up to the hills around Jerusalem. It was essential to win that landing and ascend the stairway. For, from the hills around Jerusalem, they could strike out north to Shechem and the Plain of Jezreel, west to the coastal plain, south toward Hebron and the Negeb, and thus conquer the entire country.

From the Biblical narrative it is clear that Jericho was captured by stratagem. The city was exceedingly strong. Its walls were so thick that houses were built on their tops. Joshua first sent spies into the city who, it appears, succeeded in winning over some of the inhabitants. In the account, the final capture of the fortress is accomplished with the aid of miracles. The invaders were in all likelihood assisted by their friends inside the walls. Jericho was taken and utterly destroyed.

The landing having been captured, the ascent began. True to their oath, the warriors of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh marched with the invading host. Up they climbed until they came to Ai, the next fortified city. Here an attack launched with insufficient forces was repulsed. Joshua then hit upon another stratagem. Dividing his forces, he concealed a portion of them be-

Ruins of the Walls of Ancient Jericho
In some places these walls are from ten to twelve feet thick.

hind the city and with the rest moved forward as if to attack. When the king of Ai and his warriors came out to give battle, Joshua pretended to flee, thus drawing the armed forces away from the city. The Israelites lying in ambush then rushed forward, entered the city, and set it on fire. The Aian warriors, caught between the two Hebrew contingents, were put to the sword and the city was reduced to a heap of ruins. Joshua and his host now stood on top of the central

mountain range, ready to strike north, south or west.

But before we continue the course of the conquest, we must acquaint ourselves more intimately with the land and its inhabitants.

§ 2. *Canaan Is a Fertile Land With Immense Variations in Topography and Climate. It Is the Natural Highway Between Asia and Africa.*

THE outstanding fact about Palestine is that, in spite of its small area, it is a land of amazing contrasts. At different periods, of course, its boundaries have varied. At its smallest compass, from Dan to Beer-sheba and from the Great Sea to the Jordan, it has a length of one hundred and fifty miles and a width increasing, as you go south, from twenty miles to sixty. Its area, including the east Jordan regions, is only about ten thousand square miles. Nevertheless, this area displays enormous variations of height and depth, of cold and heat, of fertility and aridity.

Palestine's surface reveals four distinct zones or strips running north and south. Standing with Joshua on the heights before Ai and looking back at the regions already traversed, we see two of these zones before us. The first consists of the heights on the other side of the Jordan, the heights of Moab and Gilead on which the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh had found such excellent grazing ground. Rising at times to an elevation of three thousand feet and more above sea level, this Transjordanian plateau slopes down gradually into the Jordan valley, the second of the four zones.

The whole of this valley lies below sea level. Rising

RELIEF MAP OF PALESTINE

Indicating the Four Topographical Zones.

in the glades of Mount Hermon, the Jordan River flows through the swampy plain of Huleh, through the shallow Lake Merom and from there it sinks rapidly into the Sea of Galilee which lies nearly seven hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean. This beautiful stretch of water is known also as Lake Kinnereth, or the Lake of the Harp, and as Lake Tiberias. Rushing

Courtesy Brentano's, New York.

THE JORDAN RIVER

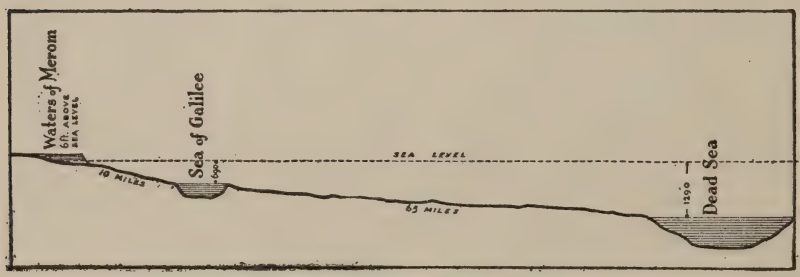
The Jordan is shallow and turbulent. From its source to its mouth it drops about 1,300 feet. Its course is so winding that in its flow from Tiberias to the Dead Sea, a distance of sixty-five miles in a straight line, the river measures 200 miles.

out from this lake, the Jordan winds on through shoals and rapids to the Dead Sea. From lake to sea it has again dropped about six hundred feet. Its name describes the character of its flow, for *Yarden,* the Hebrew for Jordan, means "descender."

Along its course it is met by numerous tributaries, most of which, however, can hardly be dignified by the

name of river. They are only dry, pebbly *wadies* or gullies, which, in the rainy season, are transformed into torrents. The only two exceptions are the Yarmuk just below Lake Tiberias and the Jabbok which runs through Gilead. To these should be added the River Arnon, which, flowing through Moab, empties into the Dead Sea.

This sea is the most remarkable body of water in the world. It lies in the earth's deepest depression, nearly thirteen hundred feet below the level of the Medi-



THE DROP OF THE JORDAN RIVER
Diagram illustrating the descent of the Jordan from Lake Merom to the Dead Sea.

terranean. It has, therefore, no outlet. All of the vast quantity of water it receives from the Jordan is evaporated. In its waters, too thick and salty to maintain life, it is impossible to dive or drown. Besides common salt, the Dead Sea contains great quantities of other minerals, such as asphalts and compounds of potassium and magnesium.

The shores of the Dead Sea are rock-strewn and desolate wastes. To the south stretches the Valley of Salt, with salt rocks of strange shape, some of them resembling the human form. Out of the sight of these arose, no doubt, the story of Lot's wife, transformed

into a pillar of salt. The sea and its shores possess a singular beauty of vivid color and fantastic formations.

From the Jordan valley the ground rises abruptly to the third zone of the land, the central range, on which we left Joshua and his warriors. This mountain chain may be called the backbone of Palestine. It is the chain which gives the country its hilly and broken character. Emerging out of the Negeb, or southland, the hills rise to a height of over three thousand feet in the region around Hebron. Here they are steep, stony and bare. They become rounder and more fertile as they roll on

A View of the Coastal Plain of Palestine

This view of the fertile plain was taken near Jaffa, a district which has become famous for its orange plantations.

into the central part of the country. In the north they again become rugged, and finally link up with the mountains of Lebanon in Syria.

Looking west from one of the high summits of the central range, as at Ai, we may descry the fourth zone of the land, the low plain along the Mediterranean. The hills of the central range descend gradually until they merge with this coastal plain, which becomes narrower

THE PROMONTORY OF MOUNT CARMEL

At the foot of the mountain lies the modern city of Haifa, with Haifa Bay stretched out before it.

as it stretches from the land of the Philistines in the south to the Plain of Sharon in the north.

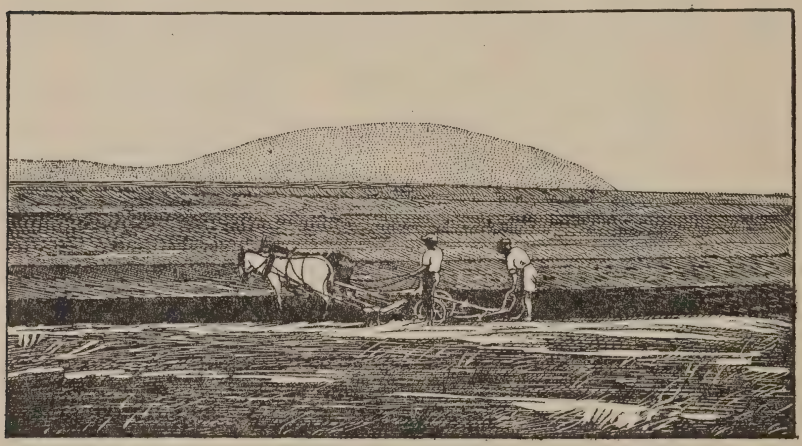
Having now taken note of the four zones of Palestine — the Transjordanian plateau, the valley of the Jordan, the central mountain range and the coastal plain — we need only note two outstanding breaks in this topographical formation, in order to obtain a complete gen-

eral picture of the country. The first break is on the coastal plain where it is almost cut off by Mount Carmel. The plain, however, manages to swing around Carmel at the Bay of Acre, thus enabling the coastal caravan road from Egypt to proceed to Phoenicia. But Mount Carmel seems to have strayed from the central range and marched right down to the sea.

The second important break occurs in the central range just east of Carmel. Here a large plain, left, as it were, by the shifting of Carmel, cuts across the country to the drop of the Jordan valley. This is the famous Plain of Jezreel, or Esdraelon, which is known also as the Valley of Armageddon. About thirteen miles long by eight miles broad, it is irregular in shape and is drained by the River Kishon which rises in the Mountains of Gilboa on the east. The caravan road from Egypt, dividing near the Carmel, ran through this plain to the Jordan valley whence it marched north into Syria and on to Babylonia. By the same road marched also the armies of the Pharaohs and those of the empires that succeeded one another in the Land of the Two Rivers. In the Plain of Jezreel they met and fought. In that valley the fate of empires was decided. Again and again, as this story progresses, we shall take our station on the mountains that girdle Jezreel, on Carmel or Tabor or Gilboa, and watch the warriors on foot or in chariots locked in combat in the broad arena below.

Varying with the altitude, the climate of Palestine is as diverse as its topography. The Jordan valley and Dead Sea region have a tropical climate. The intense heat, especially near the Dead Sea, makes that region uninhabitable except in the winter months. The rest of the country is subtropical, with the low coastal plain

hotter, of course, than the central uplands. The hot days are followed by cool, sometimes cold, nights. The winds from the north and west are cool and refreshing but the wind from the southeast, the terrible sirocco, is like the blast from a furnace and deadly to vegetation. The seasons of the year are only two, the dry summer from May to September, and the rainy winter from October to April. Of all blessings, the most eagerly and



THE PLAIN OF JEZREEL

The picture shows modern Jewish farmers at work in the valley. In the background is Mount Tabor.

constantly prayed for are dew in the summer and rain in the winter.

Issuing out of the merciless deserts, the children of Israel found this Land of Canaan a veritable paradise. It was to them "a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths springing forth in valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, and vines and fig trees and pomegranates; a land of olive trees and honey; a land wherein thou shalt not lack anything in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest

dig brass." It was, as they described it more briefly, a land "flowing with milk and honey." Owing to the contrast that Canaan presented with their previous abode, it is quite likely that the Israelites, in their enthusiasm, exaggerated its fertility. Certainly, as far as water is concerned, there is scarcity rather than abundance. Nor is it as rich in minerals as the passage quoted appears to imply. Nevertheless, with all due allowance, the fertility of the Promised Land, especially the central and northern portions of it, is beyond question. To-day many parts of it have become marshy or barren through centuries of neglect and the erosion of the soil. There is evidence, however, that in ancient times many a region now bare was covered with forests which preserved the soil and made possible a more or less even distribution of the moisture.

With the rain coming "in its season," Canaan was a land of corn and wine and oil. Along the coastal plain and in the valleys that lie in the uplands, the soil yielded excellent crops of wheat and barley, while the vine and olive flourished in those places as well as along the terraced hillsides. There were forests of cedar and cypress, sycamore and oak and other timber trees. Fig trees grew along the coastlands, and date palms in the Jordan valley. The more rugged hills of the south offered good grazing ground for cattle, especially sheep and goats. Canaan was not like Egypt, which needed to be irrigated. Canaan "drinketh water as the rain of heaven cometh down."

Finally, it should be recalled that Canaan was the bridge that united Egypt and Babylonia. It was the natural highway for the commerce between Africa and Asia. We have noted already the caravan route that

A View of the Hill Country Near Jerusalem

The Mount of Olives is in the background. The hillsides offer good ground for olive trees and vineyards.

followed the coast into Phoenicia, branching off near the Carmel and running through the Valley of Jezreel to the Jordan valley and from there northward. Another route led from the Gulf of Akaba through Transjordania to Damascus. Opposite Jericho a branch of it turned west, followed the fords of the Jordan, and led up into the interior of the country.

Up and down these highways plodded the caravans of camels and donkeys, carrying cloth from Babylonia, pottery from Syria, spices from Gilead and finely wrought articles of metal and ivory from Egypt. At

various cities along the routes — at Gaza, Ashkelon and Dor, at Hebron, Jerusalem, Shechem and Beth-shan — the merchants halted for rest and trade. They exchanged ideas as well as merchandise. Canaan became a meeting ground for the civilizations of the ancient world.

Such was the land which the children of Israel, having fought their way to the mountains, now contemplated. The fight, of course, had only begun. The enemy was numerous and strong.

Who was this enemy whom the children of Israel were now facing?

§ 3. *The Inhabitants of Canaan, the Amorites and Canaanites, Borrowed their Civilization from the Babylonians and Egyptians.*

THE nations upon whom the nomad Hebrews swooped down stand revealed to us with striking clearness. In the light that is flashed upon them by the historians and prophets of the Bible, in the additional light which has been shed on them by the discoveries of the archæologists, we can see them at work and at war, at play and at worship. We can see what clothes they wore, what sort of houses they lived in, how they traveled and how they fought. We may even look upon their faces, bearded, most of them, with the nose hooked and prominent. We may also, to some extent, at least, enter into their religious ideas and feelings, their fears and hopes and frenzies.

Before winning their way to the central range of Canaan, the children of Israel had, under Moses, come upon a number of nations on the other side of the Jordan, whose names will often recur in our story. There were, first, the Edomites, the Moabites and the Ammon-

ites. All three of them the Hebrews refrained from attacking for the reason that they recognized them as kindred peoples. For Edom was descended from Esau, brother of Jacob, and Moab and Ammon from Lot, nephew of Abraham. All three remained in possession of the territories they held; but the ties of kinship did not prevent them from being a thorn in the side of the Hebrews for a long time to come.

Another nation whom the Israelites found in Transjordania were the Amorites. They were a warlike race, these Amorites. Coming from across the Jordan, they had overcome the Ammonites and taken the city of Heshbon and other fortified places. These, the Israelites under Moses had in turn wrested from them. Many centuries earlier, the Amorites had left their home in the north on a series of invasions which had brought them to Babylonia as well as to Canaan. In Babylonia, it was they who fell heir to the "Land of Sumer and Akkad," producing the greatest of their rulers in Hammurabi (see p. 24 *ff.*).

The territory into which Joshua and his host had now penetrated, was also held by the Amorites. With a sprinkling of Hittites and Canaanites among them, they occupied the southern half of the central range from Shechem to Hebron. It will be recalled that it was a Hittite from whom Abraham had bought the field and cave of Machpelah in Hebron. But the Amorites were the dominant race in that part of the land. A tradition existed that before the Amorites established themselves, the land was inhabited by the Anakim or sons of Anak, a race of giants whose descendants were still to be found here and there. It was these giants whom the spies that Moses had sent out thought they saw.

"And we were in our own sight as grasshoppers and so we were in their sight," the spies, in their extreme terror, had reported. Farther west, on the southern part of the coastal plain, lived, as we have seen, the Philistines. They were the only nation in Canaan not of Semitic stock, their original home having been the island of Crete in the Mediterranean (see p. 119).

The northern half of the central range, and the northern half of the coastal plain were inhabited mainly by the Canaanites. Before them, the Amorites, it appears,

CANAANITE CAPTIVES LED BY EGYPTIANS

The Canaanites are bearded and dressed in long heavy robes. Their hands are manacled in wooden handcuffs suspended from their shoulders. On the left is a woman captive carrying her children. The picture is taken from an Egyptian carving.

had been masters of the entire country. But the Canaanites had come and subdued the Amorites, their victory having been more complete in the north than in the south. In Joshua's day the two races were fairly well mingled, and both lived practically the same mode of life.

As the bridge between Babylonia and Egypt, it was inevitable that Canaan should be constantly exposed to the influence of both. It was inevitable that both these great powers should seek to include Canaan within their

dominions. From its historic beginnings until the irruption of the Hebrews under Joshua, the civilizations of Babylonia and Egypt had mingled in its cities.

Until about the year 1500 B.C.E., the dominant influence in Canaan was Babylonian. The empires that flourished in the Land of the Two Rivers laid claim at one time and another to the "west lands" which included Canaan. The donkey caravans of Hammurabi's merchants carried on a brisk trade with their Amorite kinsmen in the west. The Amorites readily adopted the civilization of Babylonia, its architecture, its writing, its religious ideas, etc. And so strongly intrenched did this civilization become that the Canaanites, after subduing the Amorites, took it over from them.

EGYPTIANS STORMING A CANAANITE FORTRESS

The besiegers are scaling the walls and breaking down the gates, while the defenders are praying to their gods for help. One of the defenders is sacrificing a child to appease the anger of the gods.

Babylonia's rival, of course, was Egypt. We have seen that, as early as the Age of the Old Kingdom, about 3000 B.C.E., Egyptian armies penetrated into Canaan, while during the Middle Kingdom there are records of a number of expeditions by the armies of the Pharaohs against the "sand dwellers" of the north (see p. 89). The civilization of Egypt was, therefore, bound to affect the inhabitants of Canaan.

In the temple of Amon built at Karnak by the Egyptian conqueror Thutmose III, there is an inscription which reflects vividly the material or economic aspect of life in Canaan. It will be recalled that this Pharaoh, about the year 1460 B.C.E., defeated an alliance of princes of Syria and Canaan at Megiddo (see p. 91). The inscription contains an inventory of prisoners and booty captured by the victor. Among the animals named are horses, oxen, sheep and goats. The conqueror seized an enormous quantity of wheat. There was so much wine

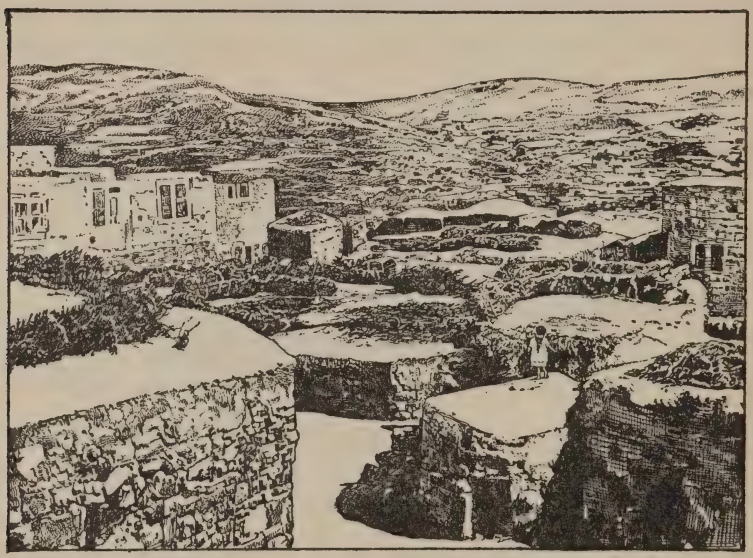
A Phœnician Merchant Ship

The ship has just arrived at an Egyptian port and is being unloaded of its cargo, apparently wine or oil.

and oil, that "his Majesty's soldiers were drunk every day and anointed themselves with oil as at festival times in Egypt."

It is clear, therefore, that Canaan was primarily a land of agriculture and stock breeding. But the manufacture of articles, both for use and ornament, had made considerable progress. The inscription lists a large number of war chariots, bows, swords and shirts of mail. There were, in addition, drinking bowls, inlaid wood, precious stones, gold, silver and other articles. Some of them must have been imported from other lands, for, as we have seen, the caravans plying between Babylonia

and Egypt had their halting places in Canaan. Through the agency of the Phoenicians, those intrepid merchant mariners, the products of the Ægean lands also made their way into the cities of Canaan. Many of the articles, however, were of native manufacture. The potter was already using the wheel to shape his vessels, and had learned to fashion them into figures of birds and animals and decorate them with colored pictures. The



A Modern Arab Village in Palestine

Note the cube-like houses, very much like those of the ancient Canaanites. Here and there appears a modern building.

war chariots made in Canaan, in the cities of Jezreel, were, it appears, particularly in demand and were exported to other lands. About the time of the Hebrew invasion, iron began to be used in addition to, and in place of, bronze, while the chariots of the princes, as the inscription of Thutmose III records, were mounted with gold.

Farming and stock raising, trading and manufacturing — such were the economic foundations of Canaan. The life of the small farmer was, no doubt, one of constant toil. In the cities, however, there is evidence of prosperity and even luxury. For the city was the residence of the ruler, his wives, his officers, his warriors and his slaves. The Canaanite city was a small place with very narrow streets and little cube-like houses. The ruler's castle rose above the rest, but the most important structure was the wall by which the city was surrounded. Sometimes there were double walls. They were thick and tall, and strengthened with turrets, towers and other fortifications. "The cities are great and fortified up to heaven," the spies, whom Moses had sent up, reported.

RAMMAN, GOD OF THUNDER

This Hittite and Canaanite god is represented as hurling bolts of lightning. The battle-ax symbolizes thunder.

At no time, so far as we know, was Canaan ever united into a single kingdom. Each city was an independent political unit — a kingdom with the ruler calling himself king. Even the Philistine cities on the coastal plain, which were united into a confederation, had each one its own king.

At one time or another all or most of the cities acknowledged, with more or less grace, the suzerainty of

Egypt and, earlier in their history, possibly that of Babylonia. But at the time of the Hebrew invasion, the suzerainty of Egypt was a mere shadow. The kings of Canaan did pretty much as they pleased. They fought and plundered one another to their heart's content. And even when the Pharaoh roused himself and marched into the country to assert his authority, he was unable to conquer it thoroughly in spite of the glowing accounts of successes which he inscribed on his monuments. The state of affairs revealed by the Amarna letters (see p. 92) existed, no doubt, in the time of Joshua also. The Pharaoh was as powerless to enforce his will on the kings of Canaan as to come to their assistance against the invader.

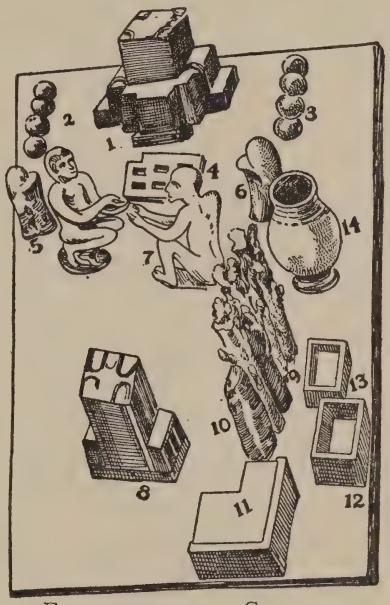
THE GODDESS ASTARTE

She was known as Ishtar in Babylonia and is called Ashtoreth in the Bible. She was the goddess of fertility. Her worship was especially popular among the Phoenicians.

Although they were politically disunited, the inhabitants of Canaan differed little with respect to religion. This religion was a confused mixture of elements taken from the Babylonians, the Egyptians, the Hittites and other nations who at one time or another extended their sway over the country. In other words, the religion of Canaan, like the rest of its civilization, was borrowed. In the early period, the dominant gods were those of Babylonia: Shamash, god of the sun, Sin, god of the moon, Ramman, god of the storm, Ishtar or Astarte, the goddess of love and fertility, and others. These gods persisted even after the waning of

Babylonian influence, just as, for that matter, the language of Babylonia and the cuneiform writing of Babylonia persisted in Canaan long after its conquest by Egypt.

The Egyptians, of course, brought their own gods into Canaan and the natives added them to their pantheon. Egyptian temples rose up in various places where Osiris was worshiped and, particularly, Amon, the special god of Thebes. Lesser Egyptian gods and goddesses also became popular, and their images, along with Egyptian scarabs, were worn as jewels and amulets.



FURNISHINGS OF A CANAANITE "HIGH PLACE"

(From a clay model found in Mesopotamia) 1, the sanctuary; 2, 3, rows of stones (use unknown); 4, table for offerings; 5, 6, sacrificial pillars; 7, two worshipers; 8, an altar; 9, 10, a row of Asheras; 11, small platform (use unknown); 12, 13, basins for washing hands and feet before entering; 14, water jar.

But the most prevalent worship was that of Baal and his female consort Baala or Ashera. The word *baal* means owner or master. There was no one Baal, but every locality, every field, hillside or spring, had its own. The Baal of a particular field was thought of as its owner and protector. It was he who provided it with water and enabled it to yield its fruit. The Baala or Ashera, who became identified with Astarte, was the goddess of fertility and motherhood.

Since the Canaanites were primarily an agricultural people, it was natural that the worship of Baal, the god of the soil and the harvest, should become predominant. This worship was carried on everywhere, with or without priests and priestesses. The high places and shady nooks were especially popular. In later generations, these "high places" were abominations to the prophets and religious leaders of Israel. They represented moral and physical degeneration. For the worship of Baal and Ashera that was conducted in those shrines was accompanied by rites that were hideous and bestial. Human sacrifice, especially the sacrifice of first-born children, was widely practiced. Horrible evidence of this practice has been found in excavations, in the form of numerous earthen jars containing skeletons of little children who had apparently been sacrificed. Worshipers and priests lashed themselves into a state of frenzy and gashed their bodies until they reeked with blood. And men and women, drunk with wine, abandoned themselves to beastly orgies.

The children of Israel under Joshua, who now stood before the cities of the Canaanites and before their "high places," were the bearers of a wholly different religion and worship. Their God demanded justice and purity. And so the struggle between the Israelites and Canaanites was bound to be more than a struggle on the field of battle. It was bound to be a bitter and ceaseless struggle between two ways of life.

But first we must follow the struggle on the field of battle. For the hosts of Israel are about to move forward and the kings of Canaan are marshaling their forces.

§ 4. *After Conquering the Land More or Less Completely, Joshua Divides It among the Tribes of the Children of Israel.*

THE kings of the south, led by Adoni-zedek of Jerusalem, now saw it was high time to put away their jealousies and quarrels and make common cause against the invader. An alliance was formed which, besides Jerusalem, included Hebron, Lachish, Eglon and Jarmuth.

The allies turned their attention first to one of their neighbors. This was the city of Gibeon, the inhabitants of which apparently preferred the invader to their countrymen. By means of a ruse, carried out with typical Oriental guile, the Gibeonites had tricked the Hebrews into making peace with them. A number of them had appeared in Joshua's camp, looking worn with travel, and represented themselves as coming from a distant land. They were ambassadors, they said, from a very far country, and prayed Joshua to make a covenant with them. The Israelites were duped but they kept the oath which they made to their deceivers.

Now the Gibeonites called on Joshua to save them, for the five kings had "encamped against Gibeon and made war upon it." Joshua fell upon the besiegers suddenly and routed them. A destructive hailstorm overtook the allies as they tried to escape to the foothills and plain, south and west. In the song of triumph which Joshua sang, it is told how the sun stood still on Gibeon and the moon in the valley of Aijalon, so that the rout of the Amorites could be made complete. It was an important victory, for it broke the power of the Amorites and it opened to the Israelites the southern

half of the central range. One after another, Joshua captured the cities of the south as far down as Gaza.

The course of events in the north was somewhat similar. The tribes of Issachar, Zebulun, Asher and Naphtali kept pushing up steadily, wresting parts of the country and making settlements, until the native rulers determined to make a united effort to drive them out. Led by Jabin, king of Hazor, a city near Lake Merom, they formed a coalition and assembled their forces near the lake.

There was a difference in the method of fighting in the north. Owing to the broad plains in that part of the country, it was possible to make use of horses and chariots. Of these, the allies had large numbers, while the Israelites had none. In spite of this enormous advantage, however, the second alliance of the kings of Canaan was no more successful than the first. Joshua's superiority lay apparently in the rapidity of his movements and in the reckless courage of his followers. Again he overwhelmed the allies with a sudden attack, scattered their forces and captured their horses and chariots. The enemy fled west and north as far as Sidon in the land of the Phoenicians. The victors burned the chariots and disabled the horses.

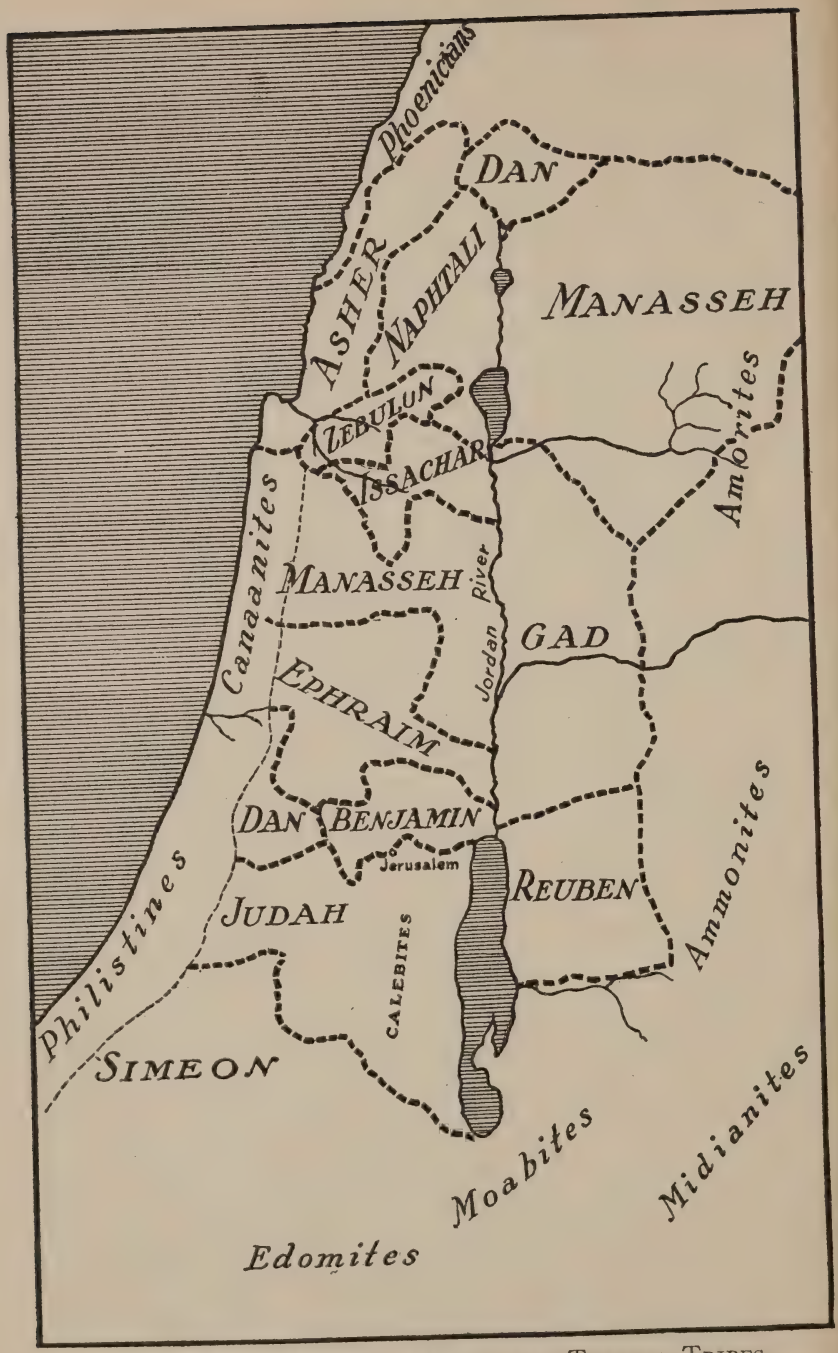
The capture of Jericho, the gateway to Canaan; the Battle of Gibeon which opened to the invaders the south; and the Battle of Merom which secured their hold on the north, are the three outstanding events in the conquest of Canaan. But the fighting was not by any means at an end. Hazor was captured and burned, and other cities also. But there were many fortified places which the invaders were not able to capture. Jerusalem was one of them, and in the Valley of Jezreel there were

Beth-shan and Taanach and Megiddo and others, the inhabitants of which, we are told in the Book of Joshua, "the children of Manassah could not drive out . . . but the Canaanites were resolved to dwell in that land."

We learn from the same book that the war lasted a long time. The Israelites did not make a clean sweep of it. "Joshua made war a long time with all those kings." For, with the exception of Gibeon, "there was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel." Moreover, besides the cities which continued to be held by the Canaanites, there were two important regions into which the Hebrews failed to penetrate. The first was the southern part of the coastal plain occupied by the Philistines. The second was the plain north of Carmel held by the Phoenicians. The failure to conquer the Philistines bore grave consequences in the near future.

Nevertheless, having grown "old and well stricken in years," Joshua judged that his task was completed. He proceeded, therefore, to divide the land on the west side of the Jordan among the nine tribes and the half tribe of Manasseh who had not yet received their portions.

The division, as recorded in the Book of Joshua, was made by lot and carried through solemnly in the presence of Joshua, the priest Eleazar, son of Aaron, and "the heads of the fathers' houses of the tribes of the children of Israel." But certain legitimate claims were duly respected. Thus, the clan of Caleb of the tribe of Judah was permitted to hold the region around Hebron which it had conquered, and to the tribe of Judah as a whole was allotted the entire south or Negeb, from the border of Edom and the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean. "The portion of the children of Judah was too



CANAAN AS DIVIDED AMONG THE TWELVE TRIBES

much for them; therefore the children of Simeon had inheritance in the midst of their inheritance." Simeon received the southwestern part of Judah's portion with Beer-sheba as the principal city.

Above Judah on the east, lay the portion of Benjamin, and on the west, the tribe of Dan struggled to maintain itself against the Philistines and Canaanites. The Danites found their border "too strait for them," so part of them moved to the extreme north as far as the foot of Mount Hermon where they "fought against Leshem (or Laish), and took it, and possessed it and dwelt therein, and called Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan, their father." Between Judah and Benjamin rose the heights of Jerusalem which, for a long time, were held by the Jebusites, thus separating Judah and Simeon from the rest of the children of Israel.

The most important section of the rest of the country fell to the proud children of Joseph: Ephraim and the other half of the tribe of Manasseh. It consisted of the hills and valleys of the central portion of the land later known as Samaria, the most fertile region of Canaan. The entire district became known also as Mount Ephraim with Shechem, the modern Nablus, as its principal city. Thus Ephraim held the most enviable position in the land. The tribe became arrogant and captious, and a center of all sorts of disturbances. In the north, in the region known to-day as Lower and Upper Galilee, the tribes of Issachar, Zebulun, Naphtali and Asher were able to establish themselves, thanks to the victory at Lake Merom.

The partition of the land took place at Shiloh in the territory of Ephraim. That city came to be recognized as the religious center of the tribes. The Ark of the

Covenant was stationed there, and the priest Eleazar and his son Phineas had their residence there. Important assemblies of the people met there "at the door of the tent of meeting."

But there was one tribe which obtained no separate territory of its own. This was the tribe of Levi to which had belonged Moses and Aaron. The Levites were to be the priests of the nation, ministering to their religious

THE SNOWY SUMMIT OF MOUNT HERMON

The summit looms in the background. It marks the northeastern limit of Palestine. Mount Hermon is the highest mountain of the country, about 9,100 feet above sea level.

needs, and they were therefore to live scattered throughout the land. Definite cities, however, were assigned for the Levites to dwell in, "with the open land about them for their cattle and their substance."

After dividing the land, Joshua, in accordance with the law of Moses, established cities of refuge "for all the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them, that whosoever killeth any person through error might flee thither and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood." The cities of refuge

west of the Jordan were Kedesh in Naphtali, Shechem in Ephraim, and Hebron in Judah. Those east of the Jordan were Golan in Manasseh, Ramoth-gilead in Gad and Bezer in Reuben.

For twenty-five years, until he died, Joshua led the children of Israel. He was a mighty warrior, and under his leadership the Hebrews fought their way into nearly every part of the land of Canaan. But unlike Moses, he left no successor behind him.

But the conquest was more or less completed. The warriors of the tribes east of the Jordan were honorably discharged and sent back to their wives and children and to their territory. The tribes settled down, each one in its portion, to begin a new life in the land promised by God to the Patriarchs.

A new life — and a new struggle.

TOPIC FOUR: LITERATURE

1. THE APPOINTMENT OF JOSHUA

(Joshua* 1)

THE account of Joshua's career as successor of Moses opens with his ordination by God Himself. The condition imposed on him is loyalty to the law of Moses. Joshua loses no time in starting on his mission. He is primarily a man of action. The people give him their oath of allegiance and with all the tribes behind him, he prepares to cross the Jordan.

NOW it came to pass after the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, that the Lord spoke unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying: "Moses My servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the

*Joshua is the first Book of the second great division of the Bible: *Nebiim* or "Prophets," the first division being the Pentateuch or *Torah* (See note to Deuteronomy, p. 171). *Nebiim* is subdivided into *Nebiim Rishonim,* "First (or Former) Prophets" and *Nebiim Achronim,* "Latter Prophets." The Book of Joshua, therefore, is the first book of *Nebiim Rishonim.*

Joshua consists of two main parts. The first (Chaps. 1–12) deals with the invasion and conquest of Canaan by the Israelites, led by the man after whom the book is named. Included in this part, is the account of the capture and destruction of Jericho and Ai, the story of the crafty Gibeonites, and the history of Joshua's campaigns against the coalition of southern kings, whom he defeated at the battle of Gibeon, and against the kings of the north, whom he overthrew at the battle of Merom. The second part (Chaps. 13–21) deals with the allotment of territory to the tribes who were settled west of the Jordan. The book contains, in addition, two orations (Chaps. 23–24[28]) delivered by Joshua to his followers urging them to be loyal to the Law of Moses and an account of the leader's death (Chap. 24[29-31]).

The following portion of the Book of Joshua is recommended for additional reading: The Capture of Ai (Chap. 8[1-24]).

land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, to you have I given it, as I spoke unto Moses. From the wilderness, and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the Great Sea,[1] toward the going down of the sun, shall be your border.

"There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee; I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Be strong and of good courage; for thou shalt cause this people to inherit the land which I swore unto their fathers[2] to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, to observe to do according to all the law, which Moses My servant commanded thee; turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest have good success whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then thou shalt make thy ways prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not affrighted, neither be thou dismayed; for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying: "Pass through the midst of the camp, and command the people, saying: Prepare you victuals; for within three days ye are to pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which the LORD your God giveth you to possess it."

And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to the half tribe of Manasseh, spoke Joshua, saying: "Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying: The LORD your God giveth you rest, and will give you this land. Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle, shall abide in the land which Moses gave you beyond the Jordan;[3] but ye shall pass over before your brethren armed, all the mighty men of valor,

[1] The Mediterranean.

[2] *i.e.*, the Patriarchs with whom the Great Covenant was made.

[3] *i.e.*, east of the Jordan.

and shall help them; until the LORD have given your brethren rest, as unto you, and they also have possessed the land which the LORD your God giveth them; then ye shall return unto the land of your possession, and possess it, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you beyond the Jordan toward the sunrising."

And they answered Joshua, saying: "All that thou hast commanded us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us we will go. According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee; only the LORD thy God be with thee, as He was with Moses. Whosoever he be that shall rebel against thy commandment, and shall not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death; only be strong and of good courage."

2. THE STORY OF THE TWO SPIES

(JOSHUA 2)

A NUMBER of features of a Canaanite city stand out graphically in the following story: the wall, broad enough for dwellings to be built on it, the use that was made of the roofs of houses, the gate which was shut as soon as an enemy was suspected, the self-contained clan which Rahab calls "my father's house," etc.

AND Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim[4] two spies secretly, saying: "Go view the land, and Jericho." And they went, and came unto the house of a woman whose name was Rahab, and lay there. And it was told the king of Jericho, saying: "Behold, there came men in hither to-night of the children of Israel to search out the land." And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying: "Bring forth the men that are come to thee, that are entered into thy house; for they are come to search out all the land." And the woman took the two men, and hid them; and she said: "Yea, the men came unto me, but I knew not whence they were; and it came to pass about the time of the shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out; whither the men went I know not; pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them."

[4] East of the Jordan opposite Jericho.

But she had brought them up to the roof, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had spread out upon the roof.[5] And the men pursued after them the way to the Jordan unto the fords;[6] and as soon as they that pursued after them were gone out, the gate was shut.

And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof; and she said unto the men: "I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away[7] before you. For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were beyond the Jordan, unto Sihon and to Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard it, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more spirit in any man, because of you; for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above, and on earth beneath. Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the LORD, since I have dealt kindly with you, that ye also will deal kindly with my father's house—and give me a true token[8]—and save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death."

And the men said unto her: "Our life for yours, if ye tell not this our business; and it shall be, when the LORD giveth us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee." Then she let them down by a cord through the window; for her house was upon the side of the wall,[9] and she dwelt upon the wall. And she said unto them: "Get you to the mountain,[10] lest the pursuers light upon you; and hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers be returned; and afterwards may ye go your way."

And the men said unto her: "We will be guiltless of this thine

[5] Flax was used for weaving linen. The stalks, before being beaten, were laid out on the flat roof to dry.

[6] There are several fords at this section of the Jordan which the pursuers naturally expected the spies would try to cross.

[7] *i.e.*, with terror.

[8] *i.e.*, some sign as evidence that her "father's house" would be spared.

[9] *i.e.*, the top of the wall.

[10] The hill country to the west, where they could hide in the caves and where the pursuers would not think of following them.

oath which thou hast made us to swear.[11] Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by; and thou shalt gather unto thee into the house thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household. And it shall be, that whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head, and we will be guiltless; and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him. But if thou utter this our business, then we will be guiltless of thine oath which thou hast made us to swear." And she said: "According unto your words, so be it." And she sent them away, and they departed; and she bound the scarlet line in the window.

And they went, and came unto the mountain, and abode there three days, until the pursuers were returned; and the pursuers sought them throughout all the way, but found them not. Then the two men returned, and descended from the mountain, and passed over, and came to Joshua the son of Nun; and they told him all that had befallen them. And they said unto Joshua: "Truly the Lord hath delivered into our hands all the land; and moreover all the inhabitants of the land do melt away before us."

[11] *i.e.*, we will be guiltless unless you follow the directions we give you.

3. THE STORY OF THE WILY GIBEONITES

(JOSHUA 9)

THE following story, like the preceding one, is filled with those circumstantial details which give the Bible narrative a glowing sense of reality and conviction of truth. The crafty stratagem of the Gibeonites is true to Oriental character and practice.

AND it came to pass, when all the kings that were beyond the Jordan, in the hill country, and in the Lowland, and on all the shore of the Great Sea in front of Lebanon, the Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite, heard thereof, that they gathered themselves together, to fight with Joshua and with Israel, with one accord.

But when the inhabitants of Gibeon [12] heard what Joshua had done unto Jericho and to Ai, they also [13] did work wilily, and went and made as if they had been ambassadors, and took old sacks upon their asses, and wine-skins, worn and rent and patched up; and worn shoes and clouted upon their feet, and worn garments upon them; and all the bread of their provision was dry and was become crumbs. And they went to Joshua unto the camp at Gilgal,[14] and said unto him, and to the men of Israel: "We are come from a far country; now therefore make ye a covenant with us." And the men of Israel said unto the Hivites:[15] "Peradventure ye dwell among us; and how shall we make a covenant with you?" And they said unto Joshua: "We are thy servants."

And Joshua said unto them: "Who are ye? and from whence come ye?" And they said unto him: "From a very far country thy servants are come because of the name of the LORD thy God; for we have heard the fame of Him, and all that he did in Egypt,

[12] Gibeon, a short distance northwest of Jerusalem, was the leading city of a group which included three others.

[13] *i.e.*, the Israelites, at Ai, had used stratagem and now the Gibeonites did the same.

[14] Gilgal, in the Jordan valley, just east of Jericho, was the Hebrew base of operations.

[15] The Gibeonites, obviously, were by nationality Hivites, one of the seven doomed nations of Canaan.

and all that He did to the two kings of the Amorites, that were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, who was at Ashtaroth. And our elders [16] and all the inhabitants of our country spoke to us, saying: Take provision in your hand for the journey, and go to meet them, and say unto them: We are your servants; and now make ye a covenant with us. This our bread we took hot for our provision out of our houses on the day we came forth to go unto you; but now, behold, it is dry, and is become crumbs. And these wine skins, which we filled, were new; and, behold, they are rent. And these our garments and our shoes are worn by reason of the very long journey."

And the men took of their provision, and asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord.[17] And Joshua made peace with them, and made a covenant with them, to let them live; and the princes of the congregation swore unto them.

And it came to pass at the end of three days after they had made a covenant with them, that they heard that they were their neighbors, and that they dwelt among them. And the children of Israel journeyed, and came unto their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon, and Chephirah, and Beeroth, and Kiriath-jearim. And the children of Israel smote them not, because the princes of the congregation had sworn unto them by the Lord, the God of Israel.

And all the congregation murmured against the princes. But all the princes said unto all the congregation: "We have sworn unto them by the Lord, the God of Israel; now therefore we may not touch them. This we will do to them, and let them live; lest wrath be upon us, because of the oath which we swore unto them." And the princes said concerning them: "Let them live"; so they became hewers of wood and drawers of water [18] unto all the congregation, as the princes had spoken concerning them.

And Joshua called for them, and he spoke unto them, saying: "Wherefore have ye beguiled us, saying: We are very far from you, when ye dwell among us? Now therefore ye are cursed,

[16] Apparently Gibeon, unlike most of the cities of Canaan, was governed not by a king but by a council of elders.

[17] *i.e.*, they did not seek advice from the priests.

[18] *i.e.*, menial laborers.

and there shall never fail to be of you bondmen, both hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God."

And they answered Joshua, and said: "Because it was certainly told thy servants, how that the LORD thy God commanded His servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you; therefore we were sore afraid for our lives because of you, and have done this thing. And now, behold, we are in thy hand: as it seemeth good and right unto thee to do unto us, do."

And so did he unto them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, that they slew them not. And Joshua made them that day hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation, and for the altar of the LORD, unto this day, in the place which He should choose.[19]

4. THE DEFEAT OF THE AMORITES

(JOSHUA 10 1-14)

AFTER marching all night from Gilgal, Joshua makes a sudden attack on the united Amorite forces besieging Gibeon, and routs them. The chronicler ascribes the victory to the intervention of the Lord, who sends down hailstones and postpones the setting of the sun and the rising of the moon in order to aid the Israelites.

NOW it came to pass, when Adoni-zedek king of Jerusalem heard how Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it; as he had done to Jericho and her king, so he had done to Ai and her king; and how the inhabitants of Gideon had made peace with Israel, and were among them; that they feared greatly, because Gibeon was a great city, as one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all the men thereof were mighty.

Wherefore Adoni-zedek king of Jerusalem sent unto Hoham king of Hebron, and unto Piram king of Jarmuth, and unto Japhia king of Lachish, and unto Debir king of Eglon, saying: "Come up unto me, and help me, and let us smite Gibeon; for

[19] Joshua made them temple servants.

it hath made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel." Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, the king of Eglon, gathered themselves together, and went up, they and all their hosts, and encamped against Gibeon, and made war against it.

And the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua to the camp of Gilgal, saying: "Slack not thy hands from thy servants;[20] come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us; for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the hill country[21] are gathered together against us." So Joshua went up from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor.

And the LORD said unto Joshua: "Fear them not; for I have delivered them into thy hand; there shall not a man of them stand against thee." Joshua therefore came upon them suddenly; for he went up from Gilgal all the night. And the LORD discomfited[22] them before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon; and they chased them by the way of the ascent of Beth-horon, and smote them to Azekah, and unto Makkedah.

And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, while they were at the descent of Beth-horon, that the LORD cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died; they were more who died with the hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.

Then spoke Joshua to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel; and he said in the sight of Israel:

"Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon;
And thou, Moon, in the valley of Aijalon."
And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed,
Until the nation had avenged themselves of their enemies.

Is not this written in the book of Jashar?[23] And the sun

[20] *i.e.*, do not abandon us.

[21] The hill country is, of course, the central range (see p. 189).

[22] *i.e.*, threw them into confusion.

[23] A collection of old songs, first passed on from mouth to mouth, and then written down. *Jashar* means "upright." The songs dealt with the heroes or upright men, their deeds and sayings.

stayed in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man; for the LORD fought for Israel.

5. RENEWAL OF THE COVENANT BY JOSHUA

(JOSHUA 23–24[28])

LIKE his great predecessor, Joshua, before his death, makes a solemn covenant with the people, by which they bind themselves to serve the God of Abraham and Moses, and in token of which Joshua sets up a great stone as a witness to future generations.

Israel's history is an increasing struggle to preserve himself in the midst of enemies and alien civilizations. In this struggle the memory of their peculiar past is perhaps the most important weapon. That is why Joshua reviews this past when he makes the covenant. Other leaders of Israel also invoke the past whenever they call on their people to stand firm.

In style, this farewell address of Joshua is similar to that of Moses (see p. 172).

AND it came to pass after many days,[24] when the LORD had given rest unto Israel from all their enemies round about, and Joshua was old and well stricken in years; that Joshua called for all Israel, for their elders and for their heads, and for their judges and for their officers, and said unto them: "I am old and well stricken in years. And ye have seen all that the LORD your God hath done unto all these nations because of you; for the LORD your God, He it is that hath fought for you. Behold, I have allotted unto you for an inheritance, according to your tribes, these nations that remain, from the Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, even unto the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun. And the LORD your God, He shall thrust them out from before you, and drive them from out of your sight; and ye shall possess their land, as the LORD your God spoke unto you. Therefore be ye very courageous to keep and

[24] A previous verse in the Book of Joshua states: "Joshua made war a long time with all those kings."

to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left; that ye come not among these nations, these that remain among you; neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear by them, neither serve them, nor worship them; but cleave unto the LORD your God, as ye have done unto this day; wherefore the LORD hath driven out from before you great nations and mighty; but as for you, no man hath stood against you unto this day. One man of you hath chased a thousand; for the LORD your God, He it is that fought for you, as He spoke unto you.

"Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the LORD your God. Else if ye do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, even these that remain among you, and make marriages with them,[25] and go in unto them, and they to you; know for a certainty that the LORD your God will no more drive these nations from out of your sight; but they shall be a snare and a trap unto you, and a scourge in your sides, and pricks in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you.

"And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth;[26] consider ye therefore in all your heart and in all your soul, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spoke concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, not one thing hath failed thereof. And it shall come to pass, that as all the good things are come upon you of which the LORD your God spoke unto you, so shall the LORD bring upon you all the evil things, until He have destroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you. When ye transgress the covenant of the LORD your God, which He commanded you, and go and serve other gods, and worship them; then shall the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which He hath given unto you."

And Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers; and they presented themselves

[25] Intermarriage was, of course, especially dangerous to the religious integrity of Israel, for, where the husband or wife was a Canaanite, the Canaanite gods were sure to make their way into the home.

[26] *i.e.*, I am going to die.

before God. And Joshua said unto all the people: "Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel: Your fathers dwelt of old time beyond the River,[27] even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor; and they served other gods. And I took your father Abraham from beyond the River, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac. And I gave unto Isaac Jacob and Esau; and I gave unto Esau mount Seir,[28] to possess it; and Jacob and his children went down into Egypt. And I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt, according to that which I did in the midst thereof; and afterwards I brought you out.

"And I brought your fathers out of Egypt; and ye came unto the sea; and the Egyptians pursued after your fathers with chariots and with horsemen unto the Red Sea. And when they cried out unto the LORD, He put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea upon them, and covered them; and your eyes saw what I did in Egypt; and ye dwelt in the wilderness many days.

"And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, that dwelt beyond the Jordan; and they fought with you; and I gave them into your hand, and ye possessed their land; and I destroyed them from before you. Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and fought against Israel; and he sent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you. But I would not hearken unto Balaam; therefore he even blessed you; so I delivered you out of his hand.

"And ye went over the Jordan, and came unto Jericho; and the men of Jericho fought against you, the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Girgashite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite; and I delivered them into your hand. And I sent the hornet before you, which drove them out from before you, even the two kings of the Amorites; not with thy sword, nor with thy bow. And I gave you a land whereon thou hadst not labored, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell therein; of vineyards and olive yards which ye planted not do ye eat.

[27] The Euphrates.
[28] Or Edom.

"Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve Him in sincerity and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

And the people answered and said: "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods; for the LORD our God, He it is that brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and that did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the peoples through the midst of whom we passed; and the LORD drove out from before us all the peoples, even the Amorites that dwelt in the land; therefore we also will serve the LORD; for He is our God."

And Joshua said unto the people: "Ye cannot serve the LORD; for He is a holy God; He is a jealous God; He will not forgive your transgression nor your sins. If ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, then He will turn and do you evil, and consume you, after that He hath done you good."

And the people said unto Joshua: "Nay; but we will serve the LORD." And Joshua said unto the people: "Ye are witnesses against yourselves[29] that ye have chosen you the LORD, to serve Him. Now therefore put away the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD, the God of Israel." And the people said unto Joshua: "The LORD our God will we serve, and unto His voice will we hearken."

So Joshua made a covenant[30] with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem. And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God; and he took a great stone, and set it up there under the oak that was by the

[29] *i.e.*, should you prove false, the choice you are now making will be evidence against you.

[30] The covenant was of course between Israel and the Lord.

sanctuary of the LORD. And Joshua said unto all the people: "Behold, this stone shall be a witness against us; for it hath heard all the words of the LORD which He spoke unto us; it shall be therefore a witness against you, lest ye deny your God." So Joshua sent the people away, every man unto his inheritance.[31]

[31] His possessions.

TOPIC FIVE
The Critical Century

TOPIC FIVE

The Critical Century

§ 1. *The Disunited Israelite Tribes Are Exposed to Attack from Strong Enemies and to the Lure of Idolatry.*

§ 2. *The Israelites Are Delivered from Different Oppressors by the Judges among Whom Deborah, Gideon and Jephthah Are the Most Important.*

§ 3. *The Philistines, after Being Checked for a Time by the Hero Samson, Defeat the Israelites and Force Them to Pay Tribute.*

TOPIC FIVE: LITERATURE

1. Deborah's Song of Triumph (*Judges* 5).
2. The Stratagem and Victory of Gideon (*Judges* 7–8 [3]).
3. Jotham's Fable (*Judges* 9 [6-21]).
4. The Betrayal and Death of Samson (*Judges* 16 [4-31]).
5. The Story of Ruth (*Ruth* 1–2; 4).

TOPIC FIVE

The Critical Century

§ 1. *The Disunited Israelite Tribes Are Exposed to Attack from Strong Enemies and to the Lure of Idolatry.*

A CRITICAL period followed in the life of Israel, a period of disunion and confusion. It lasted for more than a century: from the death of Joshua until the rise of a king over the whole nation. During this period, the history of Israel is concerned more with individual tribes than with the nation as a whole. Each tribe, dwelling in its own territory, carried on its own struggle against its enemies, and had but little interest in the weal or woe of the other tribes. It was only when they faced a common enemy, and a leader of more than usual force rose up among them, that they united to ward off the danger. Such unions, however, quickly fell apart again. They were not political unions but only temporary military alliances.

The Israelites were surrounded by enemies who represented a double danger. In the first place, the enemies had not been thoroughly subdued. They still held a large number of fortified cities throughout the land, especially in the central and northern regions. Sometimes they paid tribute to the victorious invader, but every now and then they broke loose, and, throwing off the yoke, they compelled the Israelites to pay tribute to them.

The second danger lay in the lure which the civilization of the Canaanites exercised upon the rude tribesmen who had but just come out of the desert. The invisible God of Sinai was difficult to conceive, His law of justice and purity was hard to obey. On the other hand, the idols of Baal and Ashera, like the golden calf, were always present to the senses, and their worship made a powerful appeal to the lower instincts. The Israelites were only too quick to adopt the idols of their neighbors and join in the worship on the "high places."

A Canaanite Altar

The steps led up to a platform upon which the animals were sacrificed.

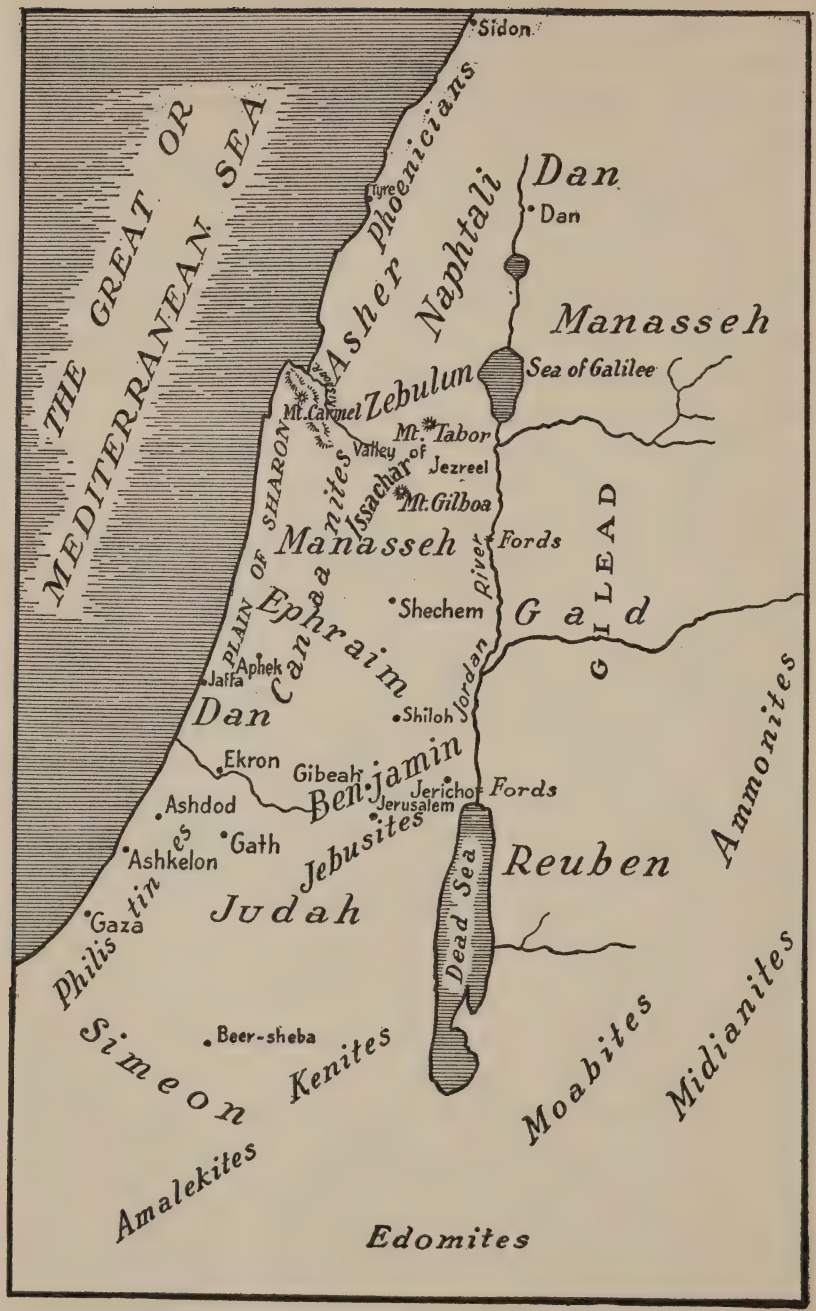
The danger of assimilation was all the greater because of the profound economic change that occurred in the life of the former nomads. Now they were settled on the soil and, of course, they took up the agricultural occupations of their neighbors. They became wine growers and olive planters and grain farmers. Having adopted their neighbors' occupations, they mingled with them and adopted their gods. They went still further and intermarried with them. "They took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their own daughters to their sons, and served their gods." Language was no barrier to the mingling of natives and newcomers for both spoke practically the same tongue. Unless the tend-

ency were checked, it could only end in the total assimilation of the Israelites and their disappearance as a separate people.

The story of the Jewish people in all ages is, in the main, the story of a struggle against those two dangers, but the battle was especially tense during that critical century. It was a struggle that produced two types of heroes, the heroes of the sword who met the first or external danger, and the heroes of the spirit who met the danger that menaced the people's soul.

The memories of the chief events of that century are assembled in the Book of Judges, which may well be called the Book of Heroes. They were all heroes of the sword. For, over and over again, the Israelites had to fight for their possessions. Sometimes the assaults of the enemy were limited to one tribe or one locality, sometimes a more general attack menaced a number of tribes at once. Then there were the nomad enemies who prowled along the fringes of the desert and swooped down every now and then to raid the villages of the tribes dwelling along the borders. The times called for heroes of the sword capable of delivering their people from the yoke of the oppressor. After achieving victory on the field of battle, they established their authority and their tribes accepted them as rulers or judges. For the principal duty of the ruler was to judge the people "in the gates of the city."

The authority of the judges rarely extended beyond their own tribes. For the rivalries of the tribes were much stronger than their sense of solidarity. Ephraim, for example, was always ready to fight if the least slur were cast on his supremacy. In the south, Benjamin was turbulent and defiant. Civil war was not an un-



ISRAEL IN THE TIME OF THE JUDGES

common occurrence. It was only when the outside enemy threatened to overwhelm them, that they joined forces. For the rest they did as they pleased. For, as the chronicler explains it, "in those days there was no king in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

Confined to its own territory and without the unifying influence of a central authority, each tribe developed along its own lines and acquired an individuality of its own. In the development of this distinct tribal personality, the special occupations which the different parts of the country made necessary, played, naturally, an important part. Thus, Asher and Naphtali in the far north, neighbors to the wealthy Phoenicians, became rich and "satisfied with favor." Asher, who dwelt nearer to the Phoenicians, soon mingled with his neighbors and is but rarely heard of in the annals of the Israelites.

South of Asher and Naphtali, the tribes of Zebulun and Issachar also learned sea-craft from the Phoenicians and "sucked the abundance of the seas and the hidden treasures of the sand." Manasseh and Ephraim, the sons of Joseph, occupied the choicest portion of the land. They became wealthy farmers, and in later times came to dwell in luxurious cities. Ephraim looked upon himself as the leader of the nation. In the last blessing of Moses, the wealth and power of Joseph are eloquently proclaimed:

> Let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph,
> And upon the crown of the head of him that is prince among his brethren.

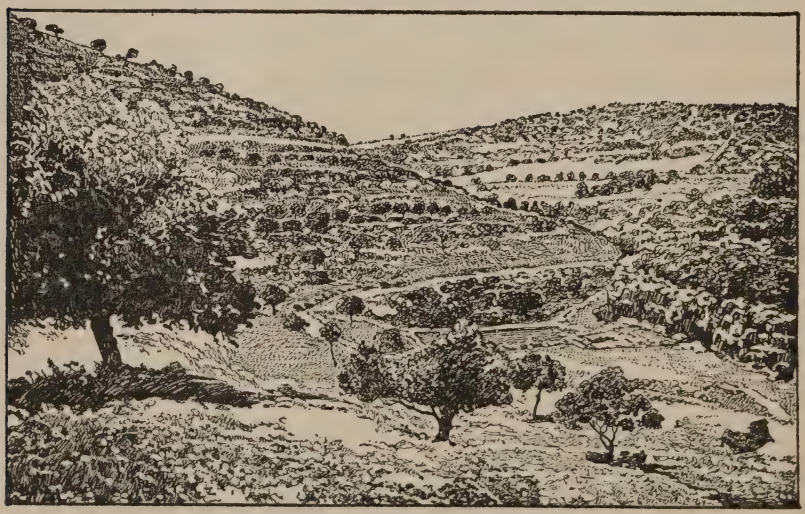
As we go farther south and the land becomes less favored, we find the tribes who occupy it more rude in their manner of life but not less spirited. Benjamin

was nearly surrounded by Canaanite foes. South lay the fortresses of the Jebusites, and west those of the Philistines. Benjamin developed a fierce martial spirit. Thus spoke Jacob concerning Benjamin when he gathered his sons about him to tell them what shall befall "in the end of days":

> Benjamin is a wolf that raveneth;
> In the morning he devoureth the prey,
> And at even he divideth the spoil.

A portion of the little tribe of Dan migrated north, as we have already told. But, though playing no great part, Dan produced the mighty hero Samson whose exploits, more than those of any other, give to the period its epic character.

The chief of the southern tribes was Judah with whom Simeon became merged. Judah remained, for the most part, a shepherd, preserving the rugged strength



THE HILL COUNTRY OF SAMARIA

This is the fertile territory which was inhabited by Ephraim. The hillsides are terraced and planted with fruit-trees and vineyards.

he brought with him from the desert. Judah was less exposed to the influence of the civilization of Canaan than the other tribes. He fought his enemies alone, asking help only of Simeon. Separated from the other tribes and living a life apart, Judah had little in common with his brothers during the critical century. He was to play his great rôle in the period that followed. For, in the end, Judah became the bulwark and the foundation of the people. In his vision Jacob speaks to him:

> "Thy hand shall be on the neck of thine enemies.
> Thy father's sons shall bow down before thee."
> Judah is a lion's whelp.
> The scepter shall not depart from Judah,
> Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet.

On the other side of the Jordan, the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, cut off from their brethren, were even more exposed to the two dangers of which we have spoken. Reuben, the first-born of Israel, is not distinguished for loyalty to his people. In times of crisis his warriors are absent from the camp of the Israelites. Living among the kindred Moabites and Ammonites, both Reuben and Gad were often attacked and oppressed by their neighbors and were largely absorbed by them.

Few are the occasions in the course of the critical century when a number of tribes join hands in a common enterprise. To meet an enemy, only those tribes respond who are immediately threatened. And the only time when something approaching a real union came into existence, was when Benjamin committed a heinous offense and the other tribes united to punish him.

The story of this crime and the civil war that followed, as told in the Book of Judges, reveals the extent

to which the low practices of the Canaanites had spread among the Israelites. For the Benjaminites dwelling in Gibeah, "certain base fellows," were guilty of a bestial and murderous deed against the concubine of an Israelite who happened to pass through their city. The story also reveals the fact that the Israelites were still highly sensitive to moral considerations. The entire nation was

RUINS ON THE SITE OF ANCIENT SHILOH
This site, which has been identified with a fair degree of certainty, is still venerated by the local Moslems.

outraged by the crime. People said: "Such a thing hath not happened nor been seen from the day that the children of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt unto this day." And the tribes gathered and made war on Benjamin, for Benjamin refused to deliver the criminals. The combined forces of Israel were twice defeated by the warriors of Benjamin, but in the end the tribe was nearly annihilated. Only a remnant was left, whom the Israelites, distressed over the impending loss of one of

the tribes, permitted to take wives and continue the stock.

In the midst of the general anarchy and disunion, a few places stand out where the worship of the God of Sinai was maintained, and which served as more or less recognized religious centers. Of these the most important was Shiloh where the sacred Ark, containing the Tablets of the Law, reposed. The sanctuary at Shiloh and its holiest possession, the Ark, were in the keeping of Levites who were directly descended from Aaron, brother of Moses. Men came to Shiloh from the surrounding towns and villages, driving their sheep and bullocks to sacrifice on the altar of the Lord. There, too, the festivals were celebrated with wine and song, and the maidens came out and danced. It was these maidens whom the Benjaminites, after the civil war that nearly annihilated their tribe, captured as they danced, and carried off to be their wives.

Elsewhere, however, the Israelites were forgetting the God of Sinai and the Law of Moses. Elsewhere they had adopted the impure worship of the Canaanites, and were sacrificing to Baal and Ashera in the "high places." Even the Levites, who were scattered among the nation, fell in with the general looseness, and served as priests in the shrines of idolatry. Thus we are told how the Danites, on their way north to conquer new territory, carried off the idols of a man named Micah, as well as the Levite who served him as priest, and made the Levite the head of an idolatrous sanctuary of their own in their new home.

Such were the disorders and perils under which the tribes of Israel lived in the days of the Judges when

"there was no king in Israel and every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

§ 2. *The Israelites Are Delivered from Different Oppressors by the Judges among Whom Deborah, Gideon and Jephthah Are the Most Important.*

WITH the general conditions of the period for our background, we may now take note of its outstanding events and of the figures who move across the arena. The events and figures, as they are depicted in the Book of Judges, are of epic grandeur. It is the age of heroes whose deeds became the subject of song and story and the inspiration of later generations.

The first of these heroes, who stands out with great clearness, was Ehud the Benjaminite. The Moabites had placed the yoke of oppression on the neck of his tribe.

MOUNT TABOR IN THE VALLEY OF JEZREEL

This solitary mountain, rising like an almost perfect dome on the northern edge of the Valley of Jezreel, is the most striking feature of the valley. It formed the boundary between Zebulun, Issachar and Naphtali.

Eglon, their king, had come across the Jordan with a host of Ammonites and Amalekites, and taken the city of Jericho in the territory of Benjamin. The gateway to the land was now in the hands of the enemy.

For eighteen years Benjamin paid tribute, until Ehud determined to put an end to the shame and the menace. The bloody exploit by which he accomplished his aim is told with a wealth of detail and with evident relish. Ehud set out to slay the oppressor, the king of Moab, a deed for which he needed great cunning as well as daring. He fashioned himself a long two-edged dagger, and, being left-handed, he hung it on his right side beneath his garment so it was not noticed. He came to the king's palace with the tribute, and then, pretending to have a secret message for the king, he found himself alone with the oppressor. "And Ehud put forth his left hand and took the sword from his right thigh and thrust it into his belly." The slayer escaped, but his work was only begun. "He blew a horn in the hill country of Ephraim and the children of Israel went down with him from the hill country and he before them." At the fords of the Jordan they overwhelmed the Moabites, and the land had rest from the oppressor.

But a greater oppressor arose in the north. He was Jabin, king of Canaan, who "had nine hundred chariots of iron, and twenty years he mightily oppressed the children of Israel." It was reserved for two women to bring doom and disgrace on Jabin and on Sisera, the commander of his host. The first woman was Deborah who "judged Israel at that time." She summoned Barak of the tribe of Naphtali, and called on him to assemble the warriors of his tribe and of Zebulun, and meet Sisera's forces at the River Kishon. Barak agreed to

do so on condition that Deborah should go with him. The Israelite forces swept down from Mount Tabor and routed the army of Sisera, chariots and all. The luckless general fled from the field and met his doom at the hands of another woman, Jael the Kenite, in whose tent he had taken refuge. Jael slew him by driving a tent peg through his temple as he lay asleep.

The victory over the Canaanites sent a thrill of triumph through all Israel. It is commemorated in the remarkable song of Deborah, a monument which will

AN ENCAMPMENT OF THE "CHILDREN OF THE EAST"

This picture gives a fair idea of what the Valley of Jezreel must have looked like when Gideon saw it covered with the tents of the Midianites and Amalekites "like locusts for multitude."

outlive all the triumphal arches that were ever erected. The song evokes a vivid picture of the times, of the oppressions that were heaped on Israel and of the tremendous effort for deliverance. The oppressor occupied all the highways so that "the travelers walked through byways." The people had been disarmed.

> Was there a shield or spear seen
> Among forty thousand in Israel?

Even tribal rule had been brought to an end by the ruthless Canaanite.

The rulers ceased in Israel, they ceased
Until that thou didst arise, Deborah,
That thou didst arise, a mother in Israel.

At Deborah's call other tribes besides Naphtali and Zebulun had responded. They are named with due honor and blessing: Ephraim and Manasseh, Benjamin and Issachar. Only Reuben and Gad remained among their sheepfolds. Dan stayed by his ships, and Asher "at the shore of the sea." Judah and Simeon are not mentioned. They were too far away and too much separated from the rest for any help to be looked for from them. The battle resulted in the destruction of the power of the Canaanites. Never again did they oppress the children of Israel.

But a new enemy rose up to plague them. The wild sons of the desert, "the children of the East," Midianites, Amalekites, and others, poured across the borders, plundering and destroying. They came "as locusts for multitude," and like a swarm of locusts they left the land bare behind them, driving off the cattle, emptying the barns and trampling down or burning the crops that stood in the fields. The Israelites fled for safety "in the dens which are in the mountains, and the caves, and the strongholds."

But "the day of Midian" came at last. A new deliverer arose in Israel, Gideon of the tribe of Manasseh. The call came to him as he was threshing his father's wheat, threshing it in the wine press in order to hide it from the Midianites. Gideon was animated by a personal motive also, for the Midianites had slain his brothers and the duty of blood revenge lay upon him. His first act was to pull down the altar of Baal and cut down the idol of Ashera which belonged to his own

father, for the strange gods were being worshiped even while the people groaned under the yoke of the oppressor.

Gideon then gathered around him the warriors of his own clan of Abiezer, and, in response to his summons, the men of the other clans of Manasseh, and of the tribes of Asher, Zebulun and Naphtali flocked to his standard. The Midianites and their allies were encamped in full force in the Valley of Jezreel. But Gideon dismissed all those of his men who were "fearful and trembling," and of the remainder he picked only three hundred, choosing those who, when taken to drink from a brook, would not "bow down upon their knees," but lifted the water to their mouths in their hands. Dividing his little force into three bands, Gideon fell upon the Midianites in the dead of night, and threw them into panic so that they were unable to distinguish friend from foe. The Midianites and their allies fled in terror across the Jordan, pursued by the Israelites.

The men of Ephraim joined in the pursuit, and captured two of the Midianite princes. But the proud Ephraimites felt deeply aggrieved because they had not been called at the beginning. They threatened violence. Gideon appeased them by flattery. Referring to the captured princes, he said: "What have I done in comparison with you? Is not the gleaning of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer?" The pursuit continued until Gideon captured the kings of the Midianites and slew them with his own hand in obedience to the mandate of blood revenge.

So weak and unstable were the religious convictions of the Israelites of that day that Gideon himself, who had begun his great enterprise by demolishing the idols

of his clan, called on his warriors to turn over to him all the gold earrings they had taken from the Midianites, and made an ephod or image which he set up in his city. "And all Israel went astray after it then," says the chronicler. No doubt, Gideon felt that the image added greatly to his dignity and power among his people. He took many wives by whom he had seventy sons. One of his concubines was a Canaanite woman of Shechem. She also bore him a son whom he named Abimelech. This son of the Canaanite proved to be a source of many misfortunes.

In their deep gratitude the men of Israel had petitioned Gideon to become their king. "Rule thou over us," said they, "both thou and thy son and thy son's son also; for thou hast saved us out of the hand of Midian." But Gideon had refused the crown. "I will not rule over you," he answered, "neither shall my son rule over you; the Lord shall rule over you." But after his death Abimelech persuaded the people of Shechem to make him their king. It was the first experiment in kingship in which the Israelites were involved, and it ended disastrously both for the king and his people.

Abimelech began his reign by murdering all his brothers with the exception of Jotham, the youngest, who managed to escape. At the coronation, Jotham appeared suddenly, and, standing on an eminence at a safe distance, he shouted to the assembly the remarkable parable of the trees who chose the worthless bramble to be their king, after the crown had been refused by all the fruit trees to whom it had been offered. "Then said the bramble: If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and take refuge in my shadow; and if not,

let fire come out of the bramble and devour the cedars of Lebanon."

Jotham's curse was fulfilled. Led by a rival of Abimelech, the people of Shechem soon rebelled against their king. Abimelech took the city and destroyed it, after slaughtering his subjects. But the rebellion spread, and while besieging a neighboring tower, Abimelech was crushed by a millstone which was dropped on his head by a woman. The wounded king called to his armor-bearer. "Draw thy sword," said he, "and kill me, that men say not of me: A woman slew him." The armor-bearer obeyed, and thus ended the career of Abimelech and the first experiment in monarchy among the Israelites.

After Gideon and Abimelech, two other leaders and judges arose in Israel, concerning whom the chronicle tells us but little. Then the scene shifts to the other side of the Jordan in the land of Gilead. The children of Ammon in whose midst dwelt Reuben and Gad rose up and oppressed them. The Ammonites even crossed the Jordan and attacked Benjamin and Judah. The Israelites gathered together to free themselves from the oppressor and looked for a leader.

They found him in Jephthah the Gileadite, "a mighty man of valor." Jephthah, who was of illegitimate birth, had been driven out by the other sons of his father and was leading the life of an outlaw. But the fame of his prowess was spread through the land. The elders of the people sought him out and promised to make him "head over all the inhabitants of Gilead," if he would lead them against the enemy.

So Jephthah took command, and he began by dispatching messengers to the king of Ammon demanding

to know what the Ammonites were doing on the land of the Israelites. There followed a diplomatic correspondence of extreme interest in which each leader sought to prove that the land belonged of right to his people. For the Israelites, Jephthah contended that his ancestors under Moses had conquered the land not from the Ammonites, but from Sihon, King of the Amorites. But Jephthah's diplomacy failed. So he had recourse to his valor. He fell upon the Ammonites and defeated them with great slaughter. "So the children of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel."

But Jephthah's joy in his victory was of short duration. For, before setting out to meet the enemy, the simple man had made the dangerous vow that, if he returned victorious, he would sacrifice "whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me." There came forth to meet him his only child, his virgin daughter! The heartbroken father felt bound by his oath, and the maiden herself urged him to execute his vow. "Do unto me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth," said she to her father. And Jephthah did so. It is clear that the savage practices of their neighbors were as yet more potent with the Israelites than the humane Mosaic law. It is going to be a long struggle before human sacrifice will be finally and completely abolished.

The haughty Ephraimites now advanced against Jephthah with the same demand as they had made upon Gideon: "Wherefore didst thou pass over to fight against the children of Ammon, and didst not call us to go with thee?" But Jephthah, apparently, was of ruder mettle than Gideon. Besides, he was in no mood to be yielding and tactful. He told them they had failed to come when

he called them, and the Ephraimites taunted the men of Gilead with being fugitives in their midst. The result was a civil war in which Ephraim was defeated. Jephthah's men captured the fords of the Jordan and slew every Ephraimite who tried to escape into his own territory. The Bible narrative tells how the Ephraimites were identified by their inability to pronounce the word *Shibboleth* which they pronounced *Sibboleth.* The arrogance of Ephraim bore him terrible fruit.

After ruling his people for six years, Jephthah died, and after him came three other judges in Israel of whom the chronicle gives us few details. The victories of

A Ford of the Jordan

Like mountain passes, river fords have important strategic value. The Jordan is fordable in a number of places (See map p. 232).

Barak, Gideon and Jephthah had broken the power of a number of Israel's oppressors. In the north, the Canaanites were thoroughly subdued. The desert marauders, the Midianites and Amalekites, had received their punishment at the hands of Gideon. In Transjordania, it was long before the Ammonites were able to raise their heads again.

On the coastal plain, however, dwelt the Philistines and we turn to follow the struggles of Israel against this most formidable enemy of all.

§ 3. *The Philistines, after Being Checked for a Time by the Hero Samson, Defeat the Israelites and Force Them to Pay Tribute.*

WHILE, as far back as the days of Joshua, the other nations of Canaan had been more or less subjugated and their territory allotted to the land-hungry Israelites, the Philistines had remained untouched. Apparently they were too strong for the invaders. The latter, fighting in loose formation and armed with spear and bow, were no match for the serried Philistine ranks aided by their swift chariots of iron. Moreover, the Philistines knew how to maintain a united front against their foes. Their five principal cities, Ekron, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath and Gaza, were joined in a powerful confederation. And, although some of these cities are named in the allotment of Judah, their inclusion represented a hope or expectation rather than an actuality.

In fact, it was not long before the Philistines gained the upper hand over their Israelite neighbors, the tribes of Judah, Dan and Benjamin. The Danites, as we saw, were compelled to seek new homes, and found them in the far north. The Philistines grew bolder and began to

expand. They moved north along the coastal plain, penetrating into the Valley of Jezreel and into the possessions of Ephraim. For more than a century this powerful enemy dominates the history of Israel. It was the grievous oppression of the Philistines which, as we shall see, finally compelled the Israelites to bow their proud necks to a king. So deep an impression did the Philistines

PHILISTINES AND EGYPTIANS IN BATTLE

This is an Egyptian inscription, and the Philistines, recognizable by their feathered hats, are getting the worst of it. Their ox-drawn chariots avail them little. On the right the arms of a Philistine captive are being bound behind him.

make on the land, that its modern name, Palestine, is derived from them.

When, in the period of the Judges, the curtain rises on the relations between the two nations, we find the Israelites subject to the Philistines. Of this subjection the Danites are the chief victims. It is not surprising, therefore, that the greatest hero who avenged the wrongs of his people against the Philistines sprang from the tribe of Dan.

This hero, Samson, son of Manoah, is different from the other heroes of the period. The portrait of him which we find in the Book of Judges is that of a giant of immense physical strength and courage, but mentally and morally he is like a child. His marvelous exploits are

purely individual: he has no army to lead against the enemy. The blows he strikes are the result of sudden impulse and to avenge personal wrongs. His limitations and weaknesses are, in fact, brought out as prominently as his strength and daring. Altogether he is an intensely human figure, at once splendid and pathetic.

Popular fancy, it is clear, played about the events of his life and found consolation in gloating over his amazing deeds against the enemy. His very birth is surrounded with signs and wonders. His mother, at the command of an angel of the Lord, consecrated him for his great mission by making him a Nazirite, that is, one who lives apart and is "holy unto the Lord." His hair was not to be cut, and he was not to touch wine or any strong drink. Out of this consecration, of which his long hair was the symbol, came his giant strength. Therefore, his strength would be sure to leave him if his hair were cut off.

His very defects are for the purpose of furthering his mission of vengeance against the Philistines. And his greatest defect is his fondness for women, even Philistine women. On his way to marry one of them he slays a young lion that "roared against him" in his path. The bees come and make honey in the lion's carcase. At the wedding feast Samson propounds to his Philistine guests the famous riddle:

> "Out of the eater came forth food,
> And out of the strong came forth sweetness."

But his bride wheedles the answer out of him and tells it to the Philistines. On the seventh day of the feast, the last day fixed for the answer, the guests say to him:

"What is sweeter than honey?
And what is stronger than a lion?"

To which Samson replies:

"If you had not plowed with my heifer
You had not found out my riddle."

It was the first betrayal by a Philistine woman who, soon afterwards, is given by her father to another man. Samson captures three hundred foxes, ties them two and two by their tails with a flaming brand between, and sets them loose in the fields of the Philistines, burning their sheaves and standing corn and olive yards. When his own people, fearful of the Philistine master, bind the hero and deliver him up, he breaks the ropes on his arms

PALM GROVES NEAR MODERN GAZA

Ancient Gaza was one of the five principal Philistine cities. It was an important trading center, being the terminal of several caravan routes. This city was the scene of Samson's most famous exploits.

as though they had become "as flax that was burnt with fire," and with the jawbone of an ass slays a thousand of the enemy. The Philistines of Gaza lie in wait for him one night, intending to slay him in the morning as he would leave their city, but while it is still dark, Samson wrenches away the gates of the city — posts, bar and all — and carries them off on his shoulders.

But now comes another betrayal by a Philistine woman, a betrayal which brings his career to its close. What the Philistine warriors are unable to accomplish, is brought about by the wiles of Delilah. Spurred on by the promise of a large reward, she entreats him to tell her the secret of his strength, and the giant is too weak to resist her cajoling and her tears. He reveals his precious secret, and, as he lies asleep, his locks are cut off and he becomes "like any other man." The Philistines bind him and put out his eyes. The betrayer gets her reward, eleven hundred pieces of silver from each of the Philistine lords, and Samson is taken to Gaza and put to the shameful labor of grinding corn in the prison house.

THE PHILISTINE GOD DAGON

This is an Assyrian representation of the god. His name is derived from a word meaning "fish." He is shown wearing a shoulder cloth with scales and fins.

But the end of the hero was not to be an ignominious prison death. His death was to be more glorious than his life. For even in his helplessness he performs his greatest act of vengeance. Moreover, his hair grows again and his strength returns. The Philistines, gathered

in the temple of Dagon, their chief god, to celebrate their triumph, order their blinded prisoner to be brought and "make sport before them." The Philistines rejoice and make merry, gloating over the helpless giant. From the roof of the temple they watch with glee his clumsy antics. But now Samson approaches the pillars on which the roof is resting. "Strengthen me, I pray Thee, only this once, O God!" he mutters. And the last deed of the hero is thus told by the chronicler of the Bible:

> And Samson took fast hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house rested, and leaned upon them, the one with his right hand, and the other with his left. And Samson said: "Let me die with the Philistines." And he bent with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead that he slew at his death were more than they that he slew in his life.

In the last words one may catch the echo of a note of triumph which is more of a longing than a reality. For the progress of the enemy was not halted by the exploits of Samson, marvelous as they were. A large force of Philistines moved up north along the Plain of Sharon and pitched camp at a place called Aphek. Their plan apparently was to gain the pass of the Carmel and capture the Valley of Jezreel. The Israelites moved forward to prevent them. They attacked the encampment of the enemy, but the Philistines repulsed them with considerable loss. The Israelites then bethought them of a plan which, they felt certain, would bring them victory. They sent to Shiloh for the Ark of the Covenant. This Ark, in which lay the Two Tables of the Law, and which had marched before them in the wilderness and in many a victory against other enemies, should march before them in a second attack on the Philistines.

The head of the priesthood at Shiloh was Eli who was directly descended from Aaron. He was a venerable old man, and, in addition to being priest, was also a judge in Israel. But even into Shiloh corruption had made its way, for Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were a disgrace to their father and to their high calling.

The Israelites sent to Shiloh and the two sons of Eli brought the Ark of the Covenant to camp. With the Ark borne before them, the Israelites again attacked the Philistines at Aphek. But they were defeated a second time. It was a defeat that amounted to a disaster. Thousands of them lay dead on the field, among the slain being the two sons of Eli. The Ark itself was captured by the enemy. It was the year 1080 B.C.E.

A fugitive brought tidings of the disaster to Eli as the old priest sat before the sanctuary. "How went the matter, my son?" asked the old man. "Israel," was the answer, "is fled before the Philistines, and there hath also been a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the Ark of God is taken." And the account in the Bible tells how the old priest, hearing of the loss of the Ark, "fell from off his seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck broke, and he died."

The victorious Philistines swept on. They took Shiloh and razed it to the ground. They subjugated the central portion of the country, setting up garrisons in the most important places, among them in Gibeah of Benjamin. The proudest tribes of Israel, Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin, had to pay tribute to the conqueror. Their warriors were disarmed and the smiths who knew how to make weapons were deported. Israelites were even compelled to serve in the Philistine army.

Was the Philistine, then, to inherit the Promised Land? And were the descendants of the Patriarchs, bearers of a new faith and a new law, to be the slaves of idolaters? Were they themselves to become worshipers of idols and, merging with their neighbors and masters, disappear from history?

TOPIC FIVE: LITERATURE

1. DEBORAH'S SONG OF TRIUMPH

(JUDGES * 5)

THIS song is believed to have been actually composed by Deborah herself. As it came down the centuries, errors crept into various parts of it, with the result that the meaning of some of the lines is obscure.

But not even the obscurities can mar the power and beauty of the song. It breathes a passion and jubilation that sweep from savage delight in the ruin and death of the enemy to sublime heights of religious emotion. It breaks out with the force and spontaneity of a volcanic eruption. This song is authentic. No amount of mere literary skill could have pro-

* This book is named after those heroes of Israel who, from the death of Joshua until the establishment of the kingdom, delivered the people from foreign oppressors and then ruled over them. As rulers, one of their principal duties was to act as judges, hence their name. The name of the book in Hebrew is *Shofetim,* meaning "Judges."

The book is found to consist of three parts. The first (Chaps. 1–3 [6]) is a sort of introduction, recounting a number of expeditions of conquest by various tribes, and describing the religious state of affairs of the times. The second (Chaps. 3 [7]–16) deals with the succession of judges including Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah, Samson and the others. The third (Chaps. 17–21), which may be regarded as an appendix to the Book, consists of two stories not concerned with judges. The first story (Chaps. 17–18) tells how the Danites, journeying north in search of a new home, took possession of a priest and certain idols belonging to Micah, an Ephraimite. The second (Chaps. 19–21) tells how the tribe of Benjamin was nearly wiped out by the other tribes in punishment for an atrocious crime committed by the Benjaminites of Gibeah.

For additional reading in the Book of Judges the following selections are recommended:

a. The Exploit of Ehud (Chap. 3 [12-30]).

b. The Defeat and Death of Sisera (Chap. 4).

c. The Story of Jephthah and his Daughter (Chap. 9).

d. The Deeds and Death of Samson (Chaps. 13–16).

duced it. It is the outcome of a rich and powerful imagination kindled to expression by overmastering passion.

The song of Deborah is of great value also for the picture it gives us of the conditions under which the Israelites lived in the midst of their enemies in the time of the Judges.

THEN sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam on that day, saying:

INVOCATION

When men let grow their hair in Israel,[1]
When the people offer themselves willingly,[2]
Bless ye the Lord.
Hear, O ye kings; give ear, O ye princes;
I, unto the LORD will I sing;
I will sing praise to the LORD, the God of Israel.

THE LORD GOES FORTH TO HELP HIS PEOPLE

LORD, when Thou didst go forth out of Seir,[3]
When Thou didst march out of the field of Edom,
The earth trembled, the heavens also dropped,
Yea, the clouds dropped water.
The mountains quaked at the presence of the LORD,
Even yon Sinai at the presence of the LORD, the God of Israel.[4]

THE BITTER OPPRESSIONS OF THE ENEMY

In the days of Shamgar[5] the son of Anath,
In the days of Jael, the highways ceased,
And the travellers walked through byways.[6]

[1] An obscure line. It probably means: When men dedicate themselves to the service of God and to fight His battles. Letting the hair grow was one of the marks of the Nazirites who were dedicated to God (See p. 249).

[2] *i.e.*, answer the summons to come and fight the enemy.

[3] Mount Seir, "the inheritance of Esau," is another name for Edom.

[4] These lines mean that the God of Israel left the mountains of the south, where His presence was wont to dwell, in order to fight with His people against their enemies.

[5] A judge who came after Ehud, and fought against the Philistines in the south.

[6] *i.e.*, the enemy in the plain controlled the main roads, compelling the Israelites to seek the byways.

The rulers ceased in Israel, they ceased,[7]
Until that thou didst arise, Deborah,
That thou didst arise a mother in Israel.
They chose new gods;[8]
Then was war in the gates;
Was there a shield or spear seen
Among forty thousand in Israel?[9]

THE PEOPLE'S LEADERS ARISE

My heart is toward the governors of Israel,
That offered themselves willingly among the people.
Bless ye the LORD.
Ye that ride on white asses,
Ye that sit on rich cloths,
And ye that walk by the way, tell of it;
Louder than the voice of archers, by the watering troughs!
There shall they rehearse the righteous acts of the LORD,
Even the righteous acts of His rulers in Israel.[10]
Then the people of the LORD went down to the gates.[11]
Awake, awake, Deborah;
Awake, awake, utter a song;
Arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive,[12] thou son of Abinoam.
Then made He a remnant to have dominion over the nobles and the people;
The LORD made me have dominion over the mighty.[13]

[7] The enemy had deposed the leaders of Israel.

[8] Obscure. It may mean new leaders.

[9] The enemy had disarmed the people.

[10] There are many obscurities in the foregoing lines. The general meaning is: All praise to the leading men of Israel who answered Deborah's call. Let all the rich and powerful (ye that ride on white asses) proclaim their great deeds wherever men gather together (by the watering troughs).

[11] *i.e.*, they assembled to go out and fight the enemy.

[12] *i.e.*, lead away your prisoners of war.

[13] The most probable meaning is: The Lord chose me, a woman, a person of no importance (remnant), to command the leaders of the people.

HOW THE TRIBES ANSWERED THE SUMMONS

Out of Ephraim came they whose root is in Amalek;[14]
After thee, Benjamin, among thy peoples;
Out of Machir[15] came down governors,
And out of Zebulun they that handle the marshal's staff.
And the princes of Issachar were with Deborah;
As was Issachar, so was Barak;
Into the valley they rushed forth at his feet.

Among the divisions of Reuben
There were great resolves of heart.[16]
Why sattest thou among the sheepfolds,
To hear the pipings for the flocks?
At the divisions of Reuben
There were great searchings of heart.
Gilead[17] abode beyond the Jordan;
And Dan, why doth he sojourn by the ships?[18]
Asher dwelt at the shore of the sea,
And abideth by its bays.
Zebulun is a people that jeoparded their lives unto the death,
And Naphtali, upon the high places of the field.

THE BATTLE IN THE VALLEY OF JEZREEL

The kings came, they fought;
Then fought the kings of Canaan,
In Taanach by the waters of Megiddo;[19]
They took no gain of money.[20]
They fought from heaven,
The stars in their courses fought against Sisera.
The brook Kishon swept them away,

[14] Some Amalekites seem to have established themselves in the hill country of Ephraim.

[15] Machir was the principal branch of the tribe of Manasseh.

[16] *i.e.*, the clans (divisions) of Reuben talked a great deal, but failed to act.

[17] "Gilead" refers to the tribe of Gad, another slacker.

[18] It will be recalled that Dan had migrated north and settled not far from the seafaring Phoenicians.

[19] See map p. 232. The waters of Megiddo are those of the River Kishon.

[20] A sarcastic allusion to the expectation of the Canaanite kings to capture a great booty.

That ancient brook, the brook Kishon.[21]
O my soul, tread them down with strength.
Then did the horsehoofs stamp
By reason of the prancings, the prancings of their mighty ones.[22]
"Curse ye Meroz," said the angel of the LORD,
"Curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof,
Because they came not to the help of the LORD,
To the help of the LORD against the mighty."[23]

THE EXPLOIT OF JAEL THE KENITE

Blessed above women shall Jael be,
The wife of Heber the Kenite,
Above women in the tent shall she be blessed.
Water he asked, milk she gave him;
In a lordly bowl she brought him curd.[24]
Her hand she put to the tent pin,
And her right hand to the workmen's hammer;
And with the hammer she smote Sisera, she smote through his head,
Yea, she pierced and struck through his temples.
At her feet he sunk, he fell, he lay;
At her feet he sunk, he fell;
Where he sunk, there he fell down dead.

IN VAIN THE MOTHER OF SISERA AWAITED HIM

Through the window she looked forth, and peered,
The mother of Sisera, through the lattice:
"Why is his chariot so long in coming?
Why tarry the wheels of his chariots?"

[21] Apparently the Kishon had become swollen with heavy rains. Note the endearment that is lavished on the brook by the grateful poetess.

[22] *i.e.*, the horses stampeded. Another translation of these two lines reads:

Then the hoofs of the horses struck down
Their warriors by their furious plunging.

[23] Meroz was probably a small village the inhabitants of which failed to halt Sisera when he passed through it. Their cowardice is contrasted with the courage of Jael.

[24] Soured milk, making an excellent drink.

The wisest of her princesses answer her,
Yea, she returneth answer to herself:
"Are they not finding, are they not dividing the spoil?
A damsel, two damsels to every man;
To Sisera a spoil of dyed garments,
A spoil of dyed garments of embroidery,
Two dyed garments of broidery for the neck of every spoiler?" [25]
So perish all Thine enemies, O LORD;
But they that love Him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might.

5. THE STRATAGEM AND VICTORY OF GIDEON

(JUDGES 7–8 [3])

THE method employed by Gideon for selecting his "bravest of the brave" has lent itself to a great deal of allegory and homily. It is sufficient for him that the three hundred refused to bend the knee, not even in order to kneel at the brook.

THEN Gideon and all the people that were with him, rose up early, and pitched beside En-harod; and the camp of Midian was on the north side of them, by Gibeath-moreh, in the valley.

And the LORD said unto Gideon: "The people that are with thee are too many for Me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel vaunt themselves against Me, saying: Mine own hand hath saved me. Now therefore make proclamation in the ears of the people, saying: Whosoever is fearful and trembling, let him return and depart early." [26] And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand.

[25] This description of the scene in Sisera's palace is magnificent. His mother and her attendants are waiting for his return, listening for the clatter of his chariot, with panic slowly creeping into their hearts, yet trying to comfort themselves with the thought that he is being delayed by the enormous booty which is to be divided; and all this time we have the picture of the mangled and bleeding Sisera lying dead in the tent of a woman.

[26] This proclamation is in accord with the Mosaic law which requires that all those who are afraid should be allowed to leave the army on the eve of battle.

And the LORD said unto Gideon: "The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there; and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee: This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee: This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go."

So he brought down the people unto the water; and the LORD said unto Gideon: "Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself;[27] likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink." And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, was three hundred men; but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water.

And the LORD said unto Gideon: "By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thy hand; and let all the people go every man unto his place." So they took the victuals of the people in their hand, and their horns; and he sent all the men of Israel every man unto his tent, but retained the three hundred men; and the camp of Midian was beneath him in the valley.

And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him: "Arise, get thee down upon the camp; for I have delivered it unto thy hand. But if thou fear to go down, go thou with Purah thy servant down to the camp. And thou shalt hear what they say; and afterwards shall thy hands be strengthened to go down upon the camp."

Then went he down with Purah his servant unto the outermost part of the armed men that were in the camp. Now the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the children of the east[28] lay along in the valley like locusts for multitude; and their camels were without number, as the sand which is upon the seashore for multitude. And when Gideon was come, behold, there was a man telling a dream unto his fellow, and saying: "Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Midian, and came unto the tent, and smote it that it fell, and turned it upside down, that the tent lay flat." And his fellow

[27] *i.e.*, set aside.

[28] The "children of the east" were the nomads from the eastern desert.

answered and said: "This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: into his hand God hath delivered Midian, and all the host."

And it was so, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshiped; and he returned into the camp of Israel, and said: "Arise; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian."

And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put into the hands of all of them horns, and empty pitchers, with torches within the pitchers. And he said unto them: "Look on me, and do likewise; and, behold, when I come to the outermost part of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do. When I blow the horn I and all that are with me, then blow ye the horns also on every side of all the camp, and say: For the LORD and for Gideon!"

So Gideon, and the hundred men that were with him, came unto the outermost part of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch,[29] when they had but newly set the watch; and they blew the horns, and broke in pieces the pitchers that were in their hands. And the three companies blew the horns, and broke the pitchers, and held the torches in their left hands, and the horns in their right hands wherewith to blow; and they cried: "The sword for the LORD and for Gideon!" And they stood every man in his place round about the camp; and all the host ran; and they shouted, and fled. And they blew the three hundred horns, and the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host; and the host fled as far as Beth-shittah toward Zererah, as far as the border of Abel-meholah, by Tabbath.[30]

And the men of Israel were gathered together out of Naphtali, and out of Asher, and out of all Manasseh, and pursued after Midian. And Gideon sent messengers throughout all the hill country of Ephraim, saying: "Come down against Midian, and take before them the waters, as far as Beth-barah, and also the Jordan." So all the men of Ephraim were gathered together, and took the waters as far as Beth-barah, and also the Jordan.

[29] The night had three watches of four hours each: the first, the middle and the morning watch. The middle watch began about 10 P.M.

[30] The sites of the places mentioned are not known with certainty.

And they took the two princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb;[31] and they slew Oreb at the Rock of Oreb, and Zeeb they slew at the Winepress of Zeeb, and pursued Midian; and they brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon beyond the Jordan.

And the men of Ephraim said unto him: "Why hast thou served us thus, that thou didst not call us when thou wentest to fight with Midian?" And they did chide with him sharply. And he said unto them: "What have I now done in comparison with you? Is not the gleaning of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer?[32] God hath delivered into your hand the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb; and what was I able to do in comparison with you?" Then their anger was abated toward him, when he had said that.

3. JOTHAM'S FABLE

(JUDGES 9 6-21)

FABLES in which trees and animals figured were current among many ancient peoples. The story is here told and applied with superb sarcasm.

AND ALL the men of Shechem assembled themselves together, and all Beth-millo,[33] and went and made Abimelech king, by the terebinth of the pillar that was in Shechem.[34]

And when they told it to Jotham, he went, and stood in the top of Mount Gerizim,[35] and lifted up his voice, and cried, and said unto them:

"Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you. The trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them; and they said unto the olive tree: Reign thou over us. But the olive tree said unto them: Should I leave my fatness, seeing that by me they honor God and man, and go to hold sway

[31] *Oreb* means "Raven" and *Zeeb* means "Wolf." Note the similarity between these names of nomad sheiks and those of American Indian chiefs.

[32] The clan to which Gideon belonged.

[33] Beth-millo was probably a town located near Shechem.

[34] This terebinth near Shechem was a famous sacred tree, near a pillar or sacred stone.

[35] Mount Gerizim is on the south side of Shechem.

over the trees? And the trees said to the fig tree: Come thou, and reign over us. But the fig tree said unto them: Should I leave my sweetness, and my good fruitage, and go to hold sway over the trees? And the trees said unto the vine: Come thou, and reign over us. And the vine said unto them: Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to hold sway over the trees?

"Then said all the trees unto the bramble:[36] Come thou, and reign over us. And the bramble said unto the trees: If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and take refuge in my shadow; and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon.

"Now therefore, if ye have dealt truly and uprightly, in that ye have made Abimelech king, and if ye have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his house, and have done unto him according to the deserving of his hands (for my father fought for you, and adventured his life, and delivered you out of the hand of Midian; and ye are risen up against my father's house this day, and have slain his sons, threescore and ten persons, upon one stone, and have made Abimelech, the son of his maidservant, king over the men of Shechem, because he is your brother), if ye then have dealt truly and uprightly with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, then rejoice ye in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you. But if not, let fire come out from Abimelech, and devour the men of Shechem, and Beth-millo; and let fire come out from the men of Shechem, and from Beth-millo, and devour Abimelech."

And Jotham ran away, and fled, and went to Beer,[37] and dwelt there, for fear of Abimelech his brother.

[36] A thorny plant which burns readily.

[37] *Beer* means "well" and there were many places with that name.

4. THE BETRAYAL AND DEATH OF SAMSON

(JUDGES 16[4-31])

THE heroic tragedy of Samson stands out in high dramatic relief in this simple narrative where quaint folklore blends with the epic. Delilah, the wily betrayer, has become a symbol in world literature of the treacherous woman in whose clutches the strong man is helpless.

AND IT came to pass afterward, that Samson loved a woman in the valley of Sorek,[38] whose name was Delilah. And the lords of the Philistines[39] came up unto her, and said unto her: "Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict him; and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver."

And Delilah said to Samson: "Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee." And Samson said unto her: "If they bind me with seven fresh bowstrings that were never dried, then shall I become weak, and be as any other man."

Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven fresh bowstrings which had not been dried, and she bound him with them. Now she had liers-in-wait abiding in the inner chamber. And she said unto him: "The Philistines are upon thee, Samson." And he broke the bowstrings as a string of tow[40] is broken when it toucheth the fire. So his strength was not known.

And Delilah said unto Samson: "Behold, thou hast mocked me, and told me lies; now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound."

And he said unto her: "If they only bind me with new ropes wherewith no work hath been done, then shall I become weak, and be as any other man."

So Delilah took new ropes, and bound him therewith, and said

[38] West of Jerusalem and extending to the coastal plain.

[39] These lords were probably the kings of the five cities (Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron and Gath) that made up the Philistine confederation.

[40] The coarse part of flax.

unto him: "The Philistines are upon thee, Samson." And the liers-in-wait were abiding in the inner chamber. And he broke them from off his arms like a thread.

And Delilah said unto Samson: "Hitherto thou hast mocked me, and told me lies; tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound." And he said unto her: "If thou weavest the seven locks of my head with the web." And she fastened it with the pin,[41] and said unto him: "The Philistines are upon thee, Samson." And he awoke out of his sleep, and plucked away the pin of the beam, and the web.

And she said unto him: "How canst thou say: I love thee, when thy heart is not with me? thou hast mocked me these three times, and hast not told me wherein thy great strength lieth."

And it came to pass, when she pressed him daily with her words, and urged him, that his soul was vexed unto death. And he told her all his heart, and said unto her: "There hath not come a razor upon my head; for I have been a Nazirite unto God[42] from my mother's womb; if I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man."

And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart,[43] she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying: "Come up this once, for he hath told me all his heart." Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and brought the money in their hand.

And she made him sleep upon her knees; and she called for a man, and had the seven locks of his head shaven off; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him. And she said: "The Philistines are upon thee, Samson." And he awoke out of his sleep, and said: "I will go out as at other times, and shake myself." But he knew not that the LORD was departed from him.

And the Philistines laid hold on him, and put out his eyes;

[41] *i.e.*, she wove his locks into the web of the loom and fastened them with the beam or pin.

[42] See p. 249.

[43] *i.e.*, all there was in his heart.

and they brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house.[44] Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven.

And the lords of the Philistines gathered them together to offer a great sacrifice unto Dagon their god,[45] and to rejoice; for they said: "Our god hath delivered Samson our enemy into our hand." And when the people saw him, they praised their god; for they said: "Our god hath delivered into our hand our enemy, and the destroyer of our country, who hath slain many of us." And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said: "Call for Samson, that he may make us sport."[46]

And they called for Samson out of the prison house; and he made sport before them; and they set him between the pillars. And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand: "Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house[47] resteth, that I may lean upon them." Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines were there; and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport.

And Samson called unto the LORD, and said: "O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray Thee, only this once, O God, that I may be this once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes." And Samson took fast hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house rested, and leaned upon them, the one with his right hand, and the other with his left. And Samson said: "Let me die with the Philistines."

And he bent with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead that he slew at his death were more than they that he slew in his life.

Then his brethren and all the house of his father came down,

[44] Grinding was done by women; therefore, to compel the once mighty Samson to do this work was deeply humiliating.

[45] Dagon was the chief idol of the Philistines, believed to have been in the form of half man, half fish. See illustration p. 251.

[46] *i.e.*, that he may entertain us by dancing before us.

[47] Or, rather, the roof of the house on which the Philistines were assembled.

and took him, and brought him up, and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the burying place of Manoah his father.

5. THE STORY OF RUTH

(Ruth 1–2; 4)

THE incidents which the story of Ruth records are not of historic importance. They concern the lives of ordinary people, and are such as must have occurred numerous times with other men and women. What has given this simple tale a place in the Bible and made it so popular, is its sheer loveliness, its idyllic beauty.

The story of Ruth is read in the synagogues during the Shabuoth festival which celebrates the harvest of the first-fruits. The writer, who must have been a literary artist of first magnitude, evokes, as if by magic, an enchanting picture of harvest fields and toiling men and women, of the sorrows and joys of a peasant people and their quaint ways of life. The story glows with the sunlight of Palestine, the fragrance of the earth is redolent in it. Its charm can only be felt, not described.

The scene is laid in the time of the Judges, but the story was written down much later when some of the customs it describes were already out of vogue. Its charm and peacefulness are in strong contrast with the turbulent times which are described in the Book of Judges.

AND IT came to pass in the days when the judges judged, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Beth-lehem in Judah [48] went to sojourn in the field of Moab,[49] he, and his wife, and his two sons. And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites [50] of Beth-lehem

[48] There was also a Beth-lehem in Zebulun, hence the mention of Judah for identification.

[49] Moab is the high table-land east of the Dead Sea and south of the Arnon River (See map p. 182).

[50] Ephrath is another name for Beth-lehem and sometimes for the district in which Beth-lehem was located.

in Judah. And they came into the field of Moab, and continued there.

And Elimelech Naomi's husband died; and she was left, and her two sons. And they took them wives of the women of Moab;[51] the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth; and they dwelt there about ten years. And Mahlon and Chilion died both of them; and the woman was left of her two children and of her husband.

Then she arose with her daughters-in-law, that she might return from the field of Moab; for she had heard in the field of Moab how that the LORD had remembered His people in giving them bread. And she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.

And Naomi said unto her two daughters-in-law: "Go, return each of you to her mother's house; the LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me. The LORD grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband." Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and wept.

And they said unto her: "Nay, but we will return with thee unto thy people." And Naomi said: "Turn back, my daughters; why will ye go with me? have I yet sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands?[52] Turn back, my daughters, go your way; for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say: I have hope, should I even have a husband to-night, and also bear sons; would ye tarry for them till they were grown; would ye

[51] The Mosaic code forbids intermarriage with Moabites although they were regarded as a kindred people, their descent being traced to Lot, nephew of Abraham.

[52] It was a law and custom among the Hebrews and other nations for the brother of a man who had died without leaving a son, to marry the widow. This is known as the *Levirate* marriage (from the Latin word *levir* meaning "husband's brother"). The children born of a Levirate marriage were regarded as the descendants not of the real father, but of the man who had died childless. The purpose of the Levirate marriage was to "raise seed" to the dead man. Naomi refers to this custom in her pleading with her daughters-in-law to leave her. This custom also, though in modified form, plays an important part in the subsequent events of the story.

shut yourselves off for them and have no husbands? nay, my daughters, for it grieveth me much for your sakes, for the hand of the LORD is gone forth against me."

RUTH FOLLOWS HER MOTHER-IN-LAW INTO JUDAH

And they lifted up their voice, and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth cleaved unto her. And she said: "Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her god; return thou after thy sister-in-law." And Ruth said: "Entreat me not to leave thee, and to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried; the LORD do so to me, and more also,[53] if aught but death part thee and me." And when she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, she left off speaking unto her.

So they two went until they came to Beth-lehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Beth-lehem, that all the city was astir concerning them, and the women said: "Is this Naomi?" And she said unto them: "Call me not Naomi, call me Marah,[54] for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me back home empty; why call ye me Naomi, seeing the LORD hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?"

So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, with her, who returned out of the field of Moab — and they came to Beth-lehem in the beginning of barley harvest.

RUTH MEETS BOAZ, A NEAR KINSMAN OF NAOMI'S HUSBAND

And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of valor,[55] of the family of Elimelech, and his name was Boaz. And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi: "Let me now go to

[53] "The Lord do so to me and more also" is the customary formula in taking an oath.

[54] *Naomi* means "pleasant," *marah* means "bitter." Naomi feels that, in view of her bitter lot, the second would be more appropriate as her name than the first.

[55] *i.e.*, a man of considerable wealth.

the field, and glean among the ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find favor."[56] And she said unto her: "Go, my daughter."

And she went, and came and gleaned in the field after the reapers; and her hap was to light on the portion of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech. And, behold, Boaz came from Beth-lehem, and said unto the reapers: "The LORD be with you." And they answered him: "The LORD bless thee." Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers: "Whose damsel is this?" And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said: "It is a Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the field of Moab; and she said: Let me glean, I pray you, and gather after the reapers among the sheaves; so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, save that she tarried a little in the house."

Then said Boaz unto Ruth: "Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither pass from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens. Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them; have I not charged the young men[57] that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn."

Then she fell on her face, and bowed down to the ground, and said unto him: "Why have I found favor in thy sight, that thou shouldest take cognizance of me, seeing I am a foreigner?" And Boaz answered and said unto her: "It hath fully been told me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thy husband; and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people that thou knewest not heretofore. The LORD recompense thy work, and be thy reward complete from the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to take refuge."

[56] The Mosaic code says: "And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corner of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleaning of thy harvest; thou shalt leave them for the poor and the stranger: I am the LORD, your God."

[57] *i.e.*, the reapers. The "maidens" followed after the reapers and bound the grain into sheaves.

Then she said: "Let me find favor in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken to the heart of thy handmaid, though I be not as one of thy handmaidens." [58]

And Boaz said unto her at mealtime: "Come hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar." [59] And she sat beside the reapers; and they reached her parched corn,[60] and she did eat and was satisfied, and left thereof. And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying: "Let her glean even among the sheaves and put her not to shame. And also pull out some for her of purpose from the bundles, and leave it, and let her glean, and rebuke her not."

So she gleaned in the field until even; and she beat out that which she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah [61] of barley. And she took it up, and went into the city; and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned; and she brought forth and gave to her that which she had left after she was satisfied. [62]

And her mother-in-law said unto her: "Where hast thou gleaned to-day? and where wroughtest thou? blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee." And she told her mother-in-law with whom she had wrought, and said: "The man's name with whom I wrought to-day is Boaz." And Naomi said unto her daughter-in-law: "Blessed be he of the LORD, who hath not left off His kindness to the living and to the dead." And Naomi said unto her: "The man is nigh of kin unto us, one of our near kinsmen." [63] And Ruth the Moabitess said: "Yea, he said unto me: Thou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have

[58] *i.e.*, I am not as one of them, since I am a foreigner.

[59] Sour wine.

[60] Roasted ears of corn.

[61] About a bushel.

[62] *i.e.*, of the parched corn of which Boaz had given her to eat more than enough.

[63] The Hebrew word for "near kinsmen" which Naomi uses is *goel*. The same word means also "redeemer." The *goel* or redeemer was in duty bound to avenge the murder of his nearest relative upon the guilty. He was also obligated to redeem the property of his nearest relative who had died, in order to keep it within the family and prevent it from falling into the hands of strangers. This duty of the *goel* plays an important part in the subsequent events of the story.

ended all my harvest." And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter-in-law: "It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, and that thou be not met in any other field."

So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest;[64] and she dwelt with her mother-in-law.

THE same night, at Naomi's behest, Ruth presents herself to Boaz and humbly prays that he perform his duty of goel *(redeemer), or near kinsman, by marrying her. (See Notes 52 and 63.) Boaz receives her joyfully and declares himself willing to perform her wish. He informs her, however, that there is a still nearer relative who must be offered the opportunity to "do the part of a kinsman." He blesses her and gives her six measures of barley and sends her back to Naomi. The following day Boaz brings the matter to a decision.*

NOW Boaz went up to the gate,[65] and sat him down there; and, behold, the near kinsman of whom Boaz spoke came by; unto whom he said: "Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here." And he turned aside, and sat down. And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said: "Sit ye down here." And they sat down.

And he said unto the near kinsman: "Naomi, that is come back out of the field of Moab, selleth the parcel of land, which was our brother Elimelech's; and I thought to disclose it unto thee, saying: Buy it before them that sit here, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it; but if it will not be redeemed, then tell me, that I may know; for there is none to redeem it beside thee; and I am after thee." [66] And he said: "I will redeem it."

[64] The wheat harvest came two or three weeks after the barley harvest.

[65] The "gate" was the market place as well as the place where people met to exchange news and gossip, and settle their disputes.

[66] The parcel of land which belonged to Elimelech, Naomi's husband, should not be allowed to pass into the hands of strangers. Boaz, therefore, calls upon the nearest kinsman to do his duty as "goel" and buy it. (See note 63.)

Then said Boaz: "What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi — hast thou also bought of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance?" [67] And the near kinsman said: "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance;[68] take thou my right of redemption on thee; for I cannot redeem it."

Now this was the custom in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning exchanging, to confirm all things: a man drew off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbor; and this was the attestation in Israel.[69] So the near kinsman said unto Boaz: "Buy it for thyself." And he drew off his shoe.

And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the people: "Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi. Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I acquired to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place; ye are witnesses this day."

And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said: "We are witnesses. The LORD make the woman that is come into thy house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel; and do thou worthily in Ephrath, and be famous in Beth-lehem; and let thy house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore unto Judah,[70] of the seed which the LORD shall give thee of this young woman."

So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife; and she bore a son. And the women said unto Naomi: "Blessed be the LORD, who hath not left thee this day without a near kinsman, and let

[67] *i.e.*, after buying the land you must marry Ruth in order to raise up an heir to Elimelech's land. This demand of Boaz really involves an extension of the Levirate marriage, the latter, in strictness, being required only of a brother. (See note 52.)

[68] *i.e.*, the property would belong not to him but to the son who might be born of the marriage and who, according to the custom, would not bear his name but that of Ruth's former husband. (See note 52.)

[69] Drawing off one's shoe and handing it to another man in the presence of witnesses indicated the surrender of one's right to the other man.

[70] The same Perez, son of Judah, is later given as an ancestor of Boaz.

his name be famous in Israel. And he shall be unto thee a restorer of life, and a nourisher of thine old age; for thy daughter-in-law, who loveth thee, who is better to thee than seven sons, hath borne him." And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it. And the women her neighbors gave it a name, saying: "There is a son born to Naomi"; and they called his name Obed; he is the father of Jesse, the father of David.

Now these are the generations of Perez: Perez begot Hezron; and Hezron begot Ram, and Ram begot Amminadab; and Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon; and Salmon begot Boaz, and Boaz begot Obed; and Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David.

TOPIC SIX

Samuel, King Saul and David

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§ 1. *Samuel, a Prophet and the Greatest of the Judges, Is Compelled in His Old Age to Find a King for Israel.*

§ 2. *Saul of Benjamin Is Chosen Israel's First King. He Overcomes the Ammonites and Inflicts a Defeat on the Philistines.*

§ 3. *Samuel Renounces Saul for Disobedience, and the King Becomes Gloomy and Dejected.*

§ 4. *David, the Young Harpist and Hero from Judah, at First Soothes Saul, but the King Becomes Morbidly Jealous of Him and Seeks to Slay Him.*

§ 5. *After Hunting David for Many Years, Saul Fights His Last Battle with the Philistines. He Is Defeated and Takes His Own Life.*

TOPIC SIX: LITERATURE

1. The Birth of Samuel (1 *Samuel* 1).
2. The Capture of the Ark and the Death of Eli (1 *Samuel* 4).
3. The Anointment of Saul (1 *Samuel* 9–10[1]).
4. The Story of David and Goliath (1 *Samuel* 17[1-54]).
5. The Friendship of David and Jonathan (1 *Samuel* 18[1-11]; 19[1-18]; 20–21[1]).
6. The Fugitive Spares His Pursuer (1 *Samuel* 26).
7. Saul's Last Battle (1 *Samuel* 31).

TOPIC SIX

Samuel, King Saul and David

§ 1. *Samuel, a Prophet and the Greatest of the Judges, Is Compelled in His Old Age to Find a King for Israel.*

A NEW leader arose in Israel, one who, in the midst of Philistine oppression, rallied the spirit of his people and kept alive their hope and faith. He was Samuel son of Elkanah. Around him gathered the young patriots of Israel, and he became their teacher and inspirer.

Tradition recounts how, even before his birth, Samuel was dedicated by his mother Hannah to the service of God. She took him to the sanctuary at Shiloh where he became a priest under the venerable Eli. There he manifested strange and wonderful powers. He seemed able to penetrate into the future, and the people looked upon him as a prophet or "seer." After the second defeat at Aphek and the destruction of Shiloh by the Philistines, Samuel, then a youth of twenty, returned to his native village of Ramah which became the center of his long and active life.

For more than half a century, Samuel was a second Moses to the oppressed children of Israel. Though he is counted among the judges, and as the greatest of them, Samuel, like Moses, is also numbered among the prophets. Like Moses, also, Samuel was no warrior: he was not a hero of the sword, but a hero of the spirit.

Underwood and Underwood.

SUPPOSED SITE OF RAMAH, BIRTHPLACE OF SAMUEL

The word *ramah* means "height," and there were several places of that name. The birthplace of Samuel was situated in Ephraim near the border of Benjamin.

Samuel was a "seer": he saw with the eye of the spirit and he could see more clearly than other men. He saw that his people's plight sprang from their disunion. Many and powerful were the forces that kept the people divided. To begin with, the blood of the free and independent nomad still ran in their veins; the instincts of the desert, which were still active, were against submission to a central authority. The sense of loyalty existed,

of course, but it was directed first to the clan and then to the tribe, where it usually came to a halt. Furthermore, as we have seen, each tribe, settled in a region of its own, had its own enemies and interests, and developed its own tribal patriotism. Tribal jealousies were rampant. The Transjordanians were extremely reluctant to send their armed men to the aid of their fellow Israelites on the west. In the south, Simeon and Judah were separated from the rest of the nation and seemed to have no part or parcel in it. Israel seemed no longer a nation. Israel was broken in body as well as in spirit.

Such were the divisive or centrifugal forces. But there existed, of course, certain unifying or centripetal forces which Samuel saw just as clearly. There was the sense of common kinship among all the tribes, of common descent from the Patriarchs, which persisted with all the tenacity of a desert instinct. It was a kinship of which their enemies were quick to remind them if they themselves were inclined to forget it. With it, went the other memories of their common past, memories of common sufferings and common triumphs. Those memories their leaders continually harped upon and appealed to. Among the unifying forces, the common enemy, now the Philistines, should, of course, be included. For a common enemy has a powerful effect in drawing a people together.

And yet, even under the grinding heel of the Philistines, there was no effective desire for union. Samuel perceived that in the days of Moses and Joshua, an even greater force had been at work. The children of Israel in those days had a common worship and a common law. They worshiped a God who was unlike the gods of the other nations. They were in possession of a law which

was unlike any other. They had, in other words, a common religion. And a religion, as the dictionary tells us, is that which "binds together."

Samuel the seer concluded, therefore, that his foremost task must be to bring Israel back to the worship of his own God and to the observance of His Law. He

SUPPOSED SITE OF MIZPAH

The word *mizpah* means a "lookout," or "commanding prospect." There were several places bearing that name. Mizpah, where Samuel convoked his assemblies, was not far from Jerusalem. The terraces on the hillsides, constructed in ancient times, are a distinctive feature of the scenery of Palestine.

must make his people put away the false gods, the Baalim and Asheras. To this task Samuel devoted himself with unflagging energy. From Ramah he made frequent journeys to Mizpah and Gilgal and many other centers of worship, judging the people and exhorting them to throw away their idols and return to the God of their fathers.

In this task Samuel did not labor alone. He had assistants who made up a rather strange company. They were nearly all young men, and, like Samuel, they traveled about the country. They did not, however, go singly, but in bands; and wherever they came they moved the people by their extraordinary demeanor. For these young men sang together, played on musical instruments and danced. They sang of the might and the glory of the Lord of Hosts, the God of Sinai, calling on the people to worship none but Him. He alone would deliver them from the hand of the oppressor, even as he had delivered their ancestors from the bondage of Egypt. Thus they roused new hope and courage in the heart of the people. As they sang, their fervor grew until it mounted into ecstasy, and, as though lost in a trance, they began to dance. People called them *nebiim,* from the word *nabi* meaning prophet, for it was believed that the spirit of God was upon them, enabling them to foretell the things that would befall in the future.

Of these bands or guilds of *nebiim,* Samuel became the teacher and guide. He composed psalms for them and taught them to play on musical instruments. He inspired them with his own patriotic zeal which they in turn communicated to the people. These half-wild enthusiasts represent the beginning of a long line of men — the Hebrew Prophets — in whom the divine spirit was powerfully at work, and the like of whom the world has

never seen again. As, generation after generation, the line continued, it became purer and more exalted, until it produced such giants of the spirit as Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah and others concerning whom this story will have much to say later.

Among the means that Samuel employed for drawing the people together and strengthening their spirit, were assemblies of the elders in Mizpah for the discussion of public affairs and for worship. Smaller gatherings, it appears, took place in Beth-el and Gilgal. In those places Samuel judged the people. "And he went from year to year in circuit to Beth-el and Gilgal and Mizpah; and he judged Israel in all those places. And his return was to Ramah; and there was his house; and there he judged Israel." There is reason to believe that Samuel succeeded also in bringing the tribe of Judah into the affairs of the nation. The southerners were a rugged folk and they, no doubt, contributed an important element of strength.

It was on the occasion of one of the assemblies at Mizpah that the Philistines came up "and drew near to battle against Israel." The Philistines, no doubt, regarded these assemblies with suspicion, believing them to be nurseries of revolution. But the spirit of the Israelites had been sufficiently revived to enable them to carry off the victory. The Philistines "were smitten before Israel" at Eben-ezer.

The victory at Eben-ezer, though it brought Israel some relief, was far from decisive. Samuel continued his labors until old age began to make it difficult for him to travel about. He was completing the human span of three score years and ten. So he appointed his two sons Joel and Abiah to judge the people in his stead. But

the two sons of Samuel were no more worthy of their great father than the sons of Eli had been worthy of theirs. "And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted justice." And the elders of the people asked one another: After Samuel — what?

The elders of the people thought it over and arrived at a momentous decision. They came to Samuel in Ramah and said to him: "Behold thou art old and thy sons walk not in thy ways; now make us a king to judge us like all the nations."

Samuel was amazed and distressed. A king! He knew what the people could expect from a king. Like Gideon, he believed that God alone should be king of Israel. He saw how the kings of the other nations enslaved their people. But there was no help for it. The elders insisted. "Give us a king," they cried, "that he may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles!" Besides, the Philistines again became threatening, and on the other side of the Jordan the Ammonites were on the warpath. The Philistines had defeated the Phoenicians and were masters of the entire coastal plain. They were preparing to overrun again the interior of Israel.

It was no time for argument or deliberation. United action alone could save the nation. And if a king could bring about united action, why then, they must choose a king! So Samuel yielded. Nevertheless, he uttered a powerful warning to the people against the course they had chosen. In a speech, which is still regarded as the most scathing denunciation of tyranny, he told the people what they must expect from their king. "This shall be the manner of the king that shall reign over you," he told them:

He will take your sons, and appoint them unto him, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and they shall run before his chariots. And he will appoint them unto him for captains of thousands, and captains of fifties; and to plow his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and the instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be perfumers, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants. And he will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your flocks; and ye shall be his servants. And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king whom ye shall have chosen you; and the LORD will not answer you in that day.

And having spoken his warning, the sorrowful old man set out to find a king for the children of Israel.

§ 2. *Saul of Benjamin Is Chosen Israel's First King. He Overcomes the Ammonites and Inflicts a Defeat on the Philistines.*

THAT charming idyl which tells how Saul son of Kish went looking for his father's stray asses and found a crown, is too well known to need retelling. He was a mere plowboy, the son of a peasant of the tribe of Benjamin, the smallest tribe of Israel. But when he appeared before Samuel, the prophet knew at once that before him stood a king. He was tall and handsome and strong. It is easy to picture him with bold eyes gazing cheerfully out of a frank and ruddy countenance. There was, no doubt, something magnetic and lovable in the appearance of the brave youth. The old man poured oil on his head and kissed him, thus anointing him king of Israel.

At once a new spirit came over the highly impressionable young man. On his way back to his father's farm near Gibeah he met one of those bands of roving prophets and "prophesied among them." That means, of course, that he was carried away by their enthusiasm and joined them in their singing and dancing. People who had known him were astonished. "Is Saul too among the prophets?" they asked. Not long afterwards, Samuel assembled the leaders of the tribes in Mizpah to choose a king, and the choice fell on Saul. "And when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward." For the first time in Israel's history the shout went up: "Long live the King!"

But no crown of gold and jewels was placed on the head of the new monarch, no palace stood ready to receive him, no armed host was drawn up to follow him into battle against his enemies. Some of his people even

refused to recognize him. "How shall this man save us?" they asked contemptuously. Saul went back to plow his father's fields and tend his flocks.

The time arrived, however, when Saul proved that he was the stuff that kings are made of. In Gilead the Ammonites had laid siege to the Israelite city of Jabesh. The inhabitants were prepared to surrender, but Nahash, king of the Ammonites, demanded the right eye of the men of the city to "lay it for a reproach upon all Israel." So shameful a condition the Israelites could not accept. They sent messengers across the Jordan beseeching their brothers to come to their aid. The messengers came to Gibeah, and when the people heard them they "lifted up their voice and wept."

But when Saul heard the news he did not weep. A sacred frenzy took possession of the man. He was on his way from the field with a yoke of oxen. He seized the oxen, cut them into twelve pieces and sent the bloody parts as a symbol and a warning to all the tribes of Israel, with the command that they come at once and place themselves behind him and Samuel, the King not daring to embark on any enterprise without the prophet. The people came. Now they knew it was the voice of a king that commanded them.

With a large army behind him, King Saul crossed the Jordan, fell upon the Ammonites besieging Jabesh and scattered them with great slaughter. All Israel now hailed the King. No voice, not even among the arrogant Ephraimites, dared to make itself heard against him.

It is important to lay stress on the fact that Saul rose to his high place by the will and consent of the people. He was chosen by the elders of the tribes, and, after

being successful in battle, he was acclaimed by the entire nation. Thus it became established as a tradition in Israel that the king, even when he succeeds as heir to his father, must be accepted by the people. He must be elected if only as a matter of form. The king of Israel, therefore, could be no despot like the monarchs of other peoples without suffering the consequences. For the democratic instinct, the instinct for freedom which Israel brought with him from the desert, was too powerful to be suppressed. In Israel the kingship itself was a democratic institution.

Saul had proven his mettle, but the real master of the land was still the Philistine. This master was no ruler but only a robber. He could not or would not help the Israelites against other enemies, such as the Ammonites, but he continued to exact tribute from them and oppress them in other ways. Saul determined to bear the disgrace no longer. It was his son Jonathan who carried out the first act of revolt. In Gibeah itself, Saul's own city, there was a garrison of Philistine soldiers headed by an officer who collected the tribute. Jonathan slew the officer and wiped out the garrison.

The trumpet of revolt against the oppressor now sounded throughout Israel, calling on the men to leave their plows and herds and gather around their king in Gilgal. But they were in no hurry to come, for the dread of the Philistine lay upon them. Instead, Saul's own force began to dwindle. The men fled across the Jordan or hid in the caves of the mountains. Saul waited. He waited especially for Samuel to come and breathe courage into the little band of six hundred men who still remained with him. But even Samuel delayed his arrival. And, in the meantime, the Philistines had come up

THE LAND OF ISRAEL IN THE TIME OF SAUL

through the hills of Ephraim and reached a high place called Michmash whence they sent out bands of raiders who swept the land in every direction.

At last the prophet arrived. In the meantime Saul had himself offered up a sacrifice. Samuel was deeply offended. Apparently the king was encroaching on the prerogatives of the priest. The inevitable conflict between the secular and the religious authority had commenced. And Samuel went away leaving Saul without the aid of the spiritual power. A heavy sadness began to creep into the heart of the King.

But now the monarch's fearless son came forward again and performed a deed of even greater heroism. Accompanied only by his armor-bearer, he climbed up a steep and dangerous cliff that led to the camp of the Philistines at Michmash. The two fell upon the outposts of the enemy and slew twenty of them at the first onset. Taken by surprise and thinking that a large army of Israelites was behind the two formidable warriors, the Philistines were thrown into panic. An earthquake added to their terror. They turned their weapons against one another and fled toward their own cities.

From a high place near Gibeah, to which Saul had retired, the King's watchmen saw the panic of the Philistines. Saul gave his men the word to press forward against the enemy. His six hundred were now joined by thousands of Israelites who came out from their hiding places, as well as by those who deserted the ranks of the Philistines whom they had been compelled to serve. On they pressed after the enemy. Not for a moment did they halt, not even to take food or water, for so had the King commanded. The passion for revenge, which lay

pent up so many years, found its opportunity at last. The pursuers must not lose contact with the foe.

But Jonathan had not heard the King's command, and, in his great fatigue, he tasted of some wild honey in the forest. The "crime" was discovered and the stern King and father was about to order his son to be put

Courtesy Brentano's, New York.

THE PASS AT MICHMASH

One of the most important roads from the north to Jerusalem led through this narrow mountain pass.

to death. But the people cried out against the cruel decree, and Saul was probably not so relentless as he wished to appear. Jonathan was saved. The people loved him and their love was not misplaced. For Jonathan was a prince among men, brave, gentle and generous. He was the true knight, "fearless and faultless."

§ 3. *Samuel Renounces Saul for Disobedience, and the King Becomes Gloomy and Dejected.*

WITH the defeat of the Philistines, Saul's prestige rose greatly and he took up in earnest the business of being king. In Gibeah, which he made his capital, he set up his royal establishment with servants and officers, as well as a special guard and standing army. "When Saul saw any mighty man," we are told, "or any valiant man, he took him unto him." He made his cousin Abner commander of his forces. To maintain this establishment, he was, no doubt, already levying taxes. Samuel's prophecy was being quickly fulfilled.

The King still looked upon the man who had made him as his teacher and guide; but the breach between the two continued to widen. The prophet must have felt that the royal power was now beginning to eclipse the authority of the priest. Besides, Saul was not the man to be scrupulously tactful in his relations with anyone. Saul was unstable, full of sudden impulses. With power came pride and arrogance. The former bashful plowboy was now ruler over a hard and turbulent people, surrounded by enemies. He probably failed to consult Samuel as often as the priest felt he should have been consulted, and Samuel must have made demands which Saul regarded as out of keeping with his royal dignity

and responsibility. A subtle enmity sprang up between king and priest.

The priest made one demand, however, with which Saul was willing enough to comply. Samuel ordered him to go down and make war upon the hereditary enemy, the Amalekites. It was to be a holy war and a war of extermination. No quarter was to be given and no booty even was to be taken. For the Amalekites had been the first to attack the children of Israel when, two centuries before, Moses was leading them through the wilderness. The Amalekites were still making bloody raids against them, particularly against the tribe of Judah.

So, at the head of a large army, Saul marched down into the territory of Agag, the dreaded king of the Amalekites, defeated him in battle and brought him a prisoner to the city of Gilgal. Samuel's injunctions were obeyed except in the matter of booty: the King permitted his warriors to drive off the enemy's cattle.

There was a great gathering in Gilgal to celebrate the victory. Saul, proud and triumphant, rejoiced in the acclaim of the people who came from all parts to do him homage. He was eager also for the blessing of the priest. For, had he not fought well the holy war? So, when Samuel stood before him, the King greeted him and said: "I have performed the commandment of the Lord." The prophet, he hoped, would say: "Well done, King Saul!" But the prophet said no such thing. Earlier in the day he had learned that Saul had set up for himself a monument. Samuel asked instead: "What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" And then, denouncing the king for disobedience, he declared: "Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He hath

also rejected thee from being king!" And with his own hand Samuel slew the Amalekite king, for to have taken him prisoner was also a violation of the command.

The words of the prophet dealt a mortal blow to the spirit of the high-strung monarch. Gloom and bitterness nested in his soul. Samuel had made him; will he not also know how to unmake him? Were all his labors and triumphs to end in rejection? Furiously he threw himself into one campaign after another, seeking in feverish action to find rest for his restless spirit. He struck now at one, now at another of the ring of enemies that circled him about. Against the Philistines, we are told, "there was sore war all the days of Saul." He fought also "against Moab, and against the children of Ammon, and against Edom and against the kings of Zobah," in the far north, near Damascus. He nearly wiped out the Gibeonites despite the treaty which Joshua had aforetimes made with them. Then he bethought him to clear the land of the witches and magicians, thinking thus to please the prophet.

But the fierce and gloomy spirit of the monarch could find no rest. Samuel's dreadful words kept preying on his mind. A morbid melancholy settled upon him; "an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him." It appeared to his officers that King Saul was going mad.

So they came and told him that by listening to beautiful music his tortured spirit would be soothed and calmed. They had found, they told him, a skillful musician, a handsome young harpist from Judea. Would not the King let the young harpist play for him?

And when the King agreed, they brought the young musician into his presence. His name was David, son

of Jesse, and he came from the city of Beth-lehem of the tribe of Judah.

§ 4. *David, the Young Harpist and Hero from Judah, at First Soothes Saul, but the King Becomes Morbidly Jealous of Him and Seeks to Slay Him.*

IT WAS a fateful moment for King Saul and for all Israel when the ruddy young harpist from Judah stood before the ruler. For Saul now stood face to face with the man who was to succeed him, while for Israel the entrance of David upon the scene meant the assumption by Judah of the leading rôle in the nation's story.

For several generations, the tribe of Judah had been practically living a life apart. The change from nomadic to settled life meant much less for the tribesmen of the south than it did for Ephraim and the other tribes of the north. Judah's neighbors, to begin with, were less advanced in civilization than the Canaanites of the north. With the exception of Hebron, which the Israelites regarded with special veneration because the fathers of their race lay buried there, the territory of Judah contained no large cities. On the stony hillsides the Judeans grazed their flocks and worshiped the invisible God of the Patriarchs in the same way as Abraham had done many centuries before. Now, of course, they looked upon the land as their own, and no longer wandered about from one place to another in search of grass and water. But the ancient habits and the ancient faith were not undermined among them as they were among the tribes of the north. The Judeans retained their old simplicity and ruggedness, and provided the nation with new strength as well as great leaders.

Tradition recounts that the aged Samuel had already gone down to Beth-lehem and taken David from the field where he was tending his father's flocks, and secretly anointed him king of Israel. But little did the unhappy Saul realize, when David was first presented to him, what rôle the radiant youth would play in his life. The King was delighted by the young musician whose playing charmed away his black moods. "And it came to pass when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took the harp and played with his hand; so Saul found relief and it was well with him, and the evil spirit de-

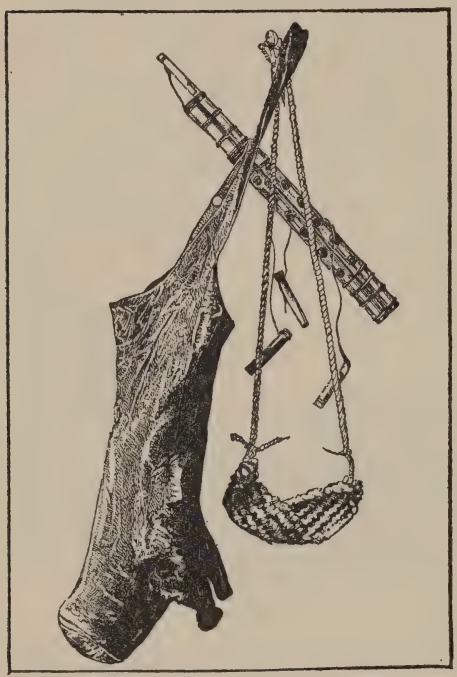
A View of Modern Beth-lehem

Beth-lehem was the birthplace of David and the scene of the story of Ruth. It was also known by the name of Ephratah. It is situated about five miles south of Jerusalem.

parted from him." David's manners and conversation were equally delightful. The melancholy monarch took a great fancy to the handsome youth and made him his armor-bearer.

Of all the stories tradition has preserved of this period of David's career, the most memorable is the account of his combat with the Philistine giant Goliath. For this young musician was made of sterner stuff than was needed by one who was to be merely a royal enter-

tainer. The war with the Philistines continued, and at one time the opposing armies stood face to face on the hills with a valley between them. And for many days the Philistine champion Goliath, a giant armed from head to foot, came down into the valley and challenged the Israelites to single combat. "Choose you a man for you," he cried, "and let him come down to me! If he be able to fight with me and kill me, then will we be your servants; but if I prevail against him and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us." But none of the Israelite warriors dared accept Goliath's challenge. Were King Saul and his people now doomed to defeat and disgrace?



A Shepherd's Sling, Reed Pipes and Water Bottle

The picture is of modern implements but they have changed little during the centuries. The water bottle is made of the skin of a goat.

At last a champion of the Israelites steps forward. He is not a giant, he is not armed from head to foot. He is the shepherd and harpist from Bethlehem. In his hand he carries only a sling, and in his shepherd's scrip he had put "five smooth stones out of the brook." True and swift flies the first stone, and the giant falls down like a cedar blasted by lightning. Be-

fore the astonished spectators on both sides of the valley realize what has happened, David has rushed forward and with the giant's own sword has severed his head from his body.

The Philistines turned and fled with the Israelites in hot pursuit. David became the national hero. The King became more attached to him than ever. The eyes of his daughter, the Princess Michal, sparkled with love as they gazed on the young champion. The daughters of Israel sang aloud his praises. All who saw David seemed to fall under his spell.

But the deepest and most touching friendship sprang up between David and Jonathan. "The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." It was a friendship that was destined to face many a test and to emerge from all of them pure and undefiled.

Now the King would not let David return to his father's pastures, but appointed him an officer of the army. The war with the Philistines continued and it took the form of border raids. David went out raiding the Philistines and came back always victorious. He became more and more popular. And it happened one day that the brooding monarch heard words which startled him. David was returning from one of his forays, and the women of Israel came out with instruments of music and with song to greet him. And the King heard them sing:

> Saul hath slain his thousands,
> And David his ten thousands.

Suddenly there came into Saul's mind the words which Samuel had spoken to him that day in Gilgal. Was David perhaps the man for whom he was to be rejected?

Indeed, David must be the man, for the Lord prospered him in all things to which he laid his hand! A haunting fear took possession of Saul. "And Saul eyed David from that day and forward."

Saul's affection for David now became transformed to suspicion and hate. His mind became dominated with one passion and purpose: to rid himself of the man whom he regarded as his rival. Three times the crazed King hurled his spear at David as the young musician played his harp to soothe him, but David eluded the weapon each time. The hero seemed to have a charmed life. Nor were Saul's plots any more successful. He sent David on perilous expeditions against the Philistines, hoping the young man would fall in battle, but David always returned in triumph. And David escaped with equal good fortune from the King's assassins, being warned in time now by his faithful friend Jonathan, now by the Princess Michal whom he had taken to wife. But Saul's suspicion and hatred only grew. The more often he saw David delivered from his hand, the more firmly he became convinced that David was the man whom the prophet Samuel had had in mind.

Finally it became clear to David as well as to Jonathan his friend that he must fly altogether from Saul's presence. "And they kissed one another and wept one with another," and so they separated and David fled.

But the King was not appeased by David's flight. He hunted the fugitive like a wild beast. David was reduced to desperate straits, compelled for seven years to live on his courage and his wits.

David fled first to Nob, a place near Jerusalem where the priests had established their sanctuary after the destruction of Shiloh. From the priest Ahimelech, a de-

scendant of Eli, David, pretending to be on a secret mission for the King, obtained food as well as the sword of Goliath which the priest had in his custody. For this assistance to David, Saul later took a terrible revenge. Ahimelech and his brother priests were massacred and Nob was destroyed. Only Abiathar, a son of Ahimelech, escaped and found refuge with David.

In the meantime, the prophet Samuel, old and worn with the labors and sorrows of more than half a century, had died. From all over the land, the Israelites assembled in the prophet's city of Ramah, where they mourned for him and where they laid him to rest. It was about the year 1020 B.C.E.

The fugitive David continued his flight south into the territory of his own tribe of Judah. After insuring the safety of his parents by committing them to the protection of the king of Moab, David took refuge in the cave of Adullam, where, before long, he found himself the leader of a little force of his own. "And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became captain over them; and there were with him about four hundred men."

David's followers, in other words, were outlaws, living in whatever manner they could. Among them were three brothers, Joab, Abishai and Asahel, nephews of his, who were destined to play an important part in his career. Once David rescued the town of Keilah from the Philistines who were sacking it. His men captured a considerable amount of booty, but, being a wild lot of freebooters, they were not popular with the settled inhabitants of the country. Many of the inhabitants were ready enough to betray David into the hands of Saul. When David

CAVES AT ADULLAM

Adullam was a fortified city for many centuries. The rocky slopes, pierced by many caves, are characteristic of the wild country through which David ranged as an outlaw.

learned, therefore, that his enemy was coming down to attack him at Keilah, he fled again and roamed from one haunt to another in the barren hills of southern Judea. There his friend Jonathan once found him and spoke to him words of comfort. But soon David had to flee again, for Saul, informed by the inhabitants of his new

place of refuge, was coming down to seek him. David was hard pressed and was saved only because Saul was compelled to depart in order to meet a new attack by the Philistines.

Having dealt with the enemy, the mad King resumed the hunt. David had retired to the wilderness of En-gedi near the Dead Sea, and Saul followed him. Once the King chanced to enter a cave occupied by David and some of his men, but despite the urging of his companions, David refused to injure "the Lord's anointed." He contented himself with cutting off a piece of Saul's garment. Then, as Saul was on his way, David called to him from a distance and held up the piece of the garment. "See," he cried, "the skirt of thy robe in my hand! For, in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe and killed thee not, know thou that there is neither evil nor transgression in my hand." The impulsive king repented bitterly. He wept, and cried: "Thou art more righteous than I."

But soon enough the King's mood changed, and he again took up the hunt. During the respite, David strengthened his position in the land by marrying the wealthy Abigail of the powerful clan of Caleb. Saul, informed by the inhabitants of David's whereabouts, came down to seek him. Accompanied by his nephew Abishai, David penetrated stealthily into Saul's camp, and again the King was in his power as he lay asleep. But David only took the King's spear and his cruse of water and went away. Then, from a hill overlooking Saul's camp, he held up the spear and the pitcher and taunted Abner for not guarding his master. Again Saul had a spasm of contrition. "I have sinned," he cried, "behold, I have played the fool and erred exceedingly."

But David knew too well what store to put in the moods of the capricious monarch.

David's situation, in fact, was becoming more and more desperate. His little band of refugees and outlaws was surrounded by spies and informers. Without means of support, they were compelled to live on the inhabitants of the land and therefore made enemies of them. It was

Courtesy Brentano's, New York.

SITE OF EN-GEDI

Situated in the wilderness of Judah on the western shore of the Dead Sea.

plain that within the territory of the King there could be no safety for David. Capture meant death and surrender also meant death. The fugitive, therefore, adopted the only course which seemed open to him. He went to Achish, the Philistine king of Gath, the enemy of his people, and asked for refuge.

Achish received David and his band, believing that the doughty warrior, formerly the terror of the Philistines, had now turned traitor to his people and would

fight against them. He gave David the fortified city of Ziklag for him and his followers to dwell in. From Ziklag the cunning outlaw made raids, not, however, against his own people of Judah, as Achish believed, but against the Amalekites and others of his people's enemies.

He was now free from the pursuit of Saul. But he was playing an exceedingly dangerous game. How long would he be able to dupe the Philistine enemy?

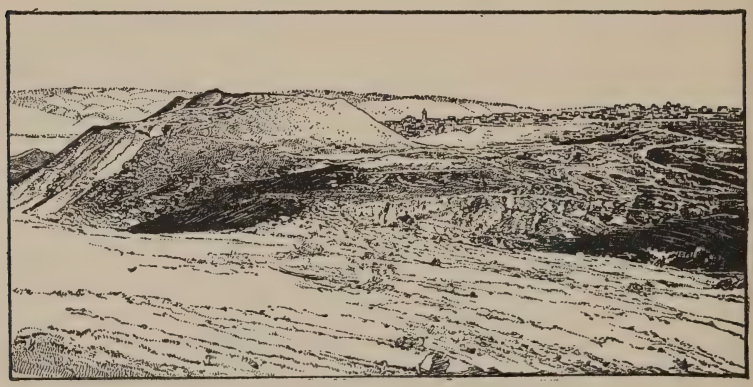
§ 5. *After Hunting David for Many Years, Saul Fights His Last Battle with the Philistines. He Is Defeated and Takes His Own Life.*

FOR Israel and King Saul a new crisis now arose. The Philistines assembled in full force for a decisive battle. From their cities in the south, their spearmen, bowmen and chariots marched up the coast unhindered, and swept into the Valley of Jezreel. They encamped near Shunem, while Saul hastily gathered his warriors and brought them to the slopes of Mount Gilboa. The last act in the tragedy of King Saul is about to be enacted.

By another stroke of that good fortune which always attended him, David had a narrow escape from being compelled to fight against his own people. King Achish, his patron and protector, had summoned him to join his forces, and David was compelled to march with his contingent in the army of the Philistines. At Aphek, however, the other Philistine leaders objected to his presence among them. They did not trust the Hebrew chieftain who had once wrought such havoc among them. They insisted that David be sent away, and Achish was forced to yield.

When he returned to Ziklag, David found that the

Amalekites had taken advantage of his absence to raid and burn his stronghold and carry off the women and children and all the spoil they could seize. Immediately David pursued the Amalekites, and, having caught up with them, he inflicted a crushing defeat upon them, recovered all they had carried off and possessed himself of much booty besides. Of this booty the wily chieftain



THE SITE OF ANCIENT BETH-SHAN

The old city lies buried in the mound on the left. The modern town of Beisan is on the hill to the right and in the valley below it.

sent presents to the elders of Judah in "all the places where David himself and his men were wont to haunt." David knew how to make friends as well as how to overcome enemies.

In the north, in the meantime, events were following their disastrous course. In the account of this final episode in the career of Israel's first king, tradition has preserved a profoundly tragic picture of one whose inner disruption combined with outer forces to bring about the inevitable end. Saul was now in the last stages of the moral malady, that morbid melancholia, which made a pitiful old man of the glorious youth whom Samuel had once crowned. He looked out on the mighty Philistine

host and his heart was dismayed. A fierce desire to know the outcome of the battle took possession of him. The usual modes of divination, we are told, failed him. So he, who had formerly driven the witches from the land, sought one out in En-dor, who, by her black arts, raised up the spirit of Samuel from the dead. "Tomorrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me!" were the words the King heard. With the knowledge that his doom was at hand, the King returned to fight his last battle.

On the morrow the armies clashed. It was the year 1013 B.C.E. The Philistine chariots swept down on the Israelites while the archers covered them with a cloud of arrows. The battle raged furiously. But in the end, the Israelites were unable to stand their ground. They broke and fled up the slopes of Gilboa where they were mowed down by the Philistine bowmen. Among the slain were Jonathan and two of his brothers.

The Philistines pressed around the King who was already wounded. Saul turned to his armor-bearer. "Draw thy sword," he commanded him, "and thrust me through therewith." But the armor-bearer dared not. "Therefore Saul took his sword and fell upon it."

The following day the victorious enemy found his body and abused it. They hung it on the wall of the city of Beth-shan. But the men of Jabesh, whom Saul had once saved from shame and oppression, crossed the Jordan and rescued the body. They took it back to their city where they burned it and buried the bones, and mourned for their King.

The pain and the tumult of life were over. The tortured soul of the King had repose at last.

TOPIC SIX: LITERATURE

1. THE BIRTH OF SAMUEL

(1 Samuel * 1)

IMBEDDED in the following narrative is a great deal of the social and religious life of early Israel. The importance of Shiloh as a religious center stands out particularly, for the Ark of the Covenant was kept there. From all the surrounding country the husbandmen came there with their families "to worship and to sacrifice," and to feast. A very affecting story is this of a woman who yearns to be the mother of a son, and it is told with touching simplicity.

* After the Book of Judges, in the division of the Bible known as *Nebiim* or Prophets, comes the Book of Samuel, containing the history of Israel from the birth of Samuel, the last of the Judges, until the old age of King David. The Book is divided into two parts commonly referred to as 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel.

The first part, or 1 Samuel, consists of three divisions. The first (Chaps. 1–7) is the history of Samuel to the end of his judgeship, when Saul became king. This part tells of the birth of Samuel, his early life with Eli in the sanctuary of Shiloh, the defeat of Israel by the Philistines, the loss of the Ark, its wanderings, and the subsequent victory over the Philistines.

The second part of 1 Samuel (Chaps. 8–15) begins with the demand by Israel for a king, and continues with the story of Saul's search for his father's strayed asses, his anointment by Samuel, his election to the kingship, his victory over the Ammonites at Jabesh-gilead, his campaign against the Philistines, Jonathan's exploits, Saul's war against the Amalekites, and his rejection by Samuel.

The third part of 1 Samuel (Chaps. 16–31) may be entiled, "Saul and David." It begins with the secret anointment of David by Samuel, and goes on to tell how the youthful harpist was introduced to the moody Saul, and of his victory over Goliath. Then comes the account of Saul's wild jealousy of the popular warrior, of his attempts to slay him, and of David's flight and adventures in the wilderness of Judea and with the Philistines. Interwoven with these incidents is the story of the friendship between

NOW there was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim,[1] of the hill country of Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite. And he had two wives: the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninah; and Peninah had children, but Hannah had no children.

And this man went up out of his city from year to year to worship and to sacrifice unto the LORD of hosts[2] in Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there priests unto the LORD.

And it came to pass upon a day, when Elkanah sacrificed, that he gave to Peninah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, portions;[3] but unto Hannah he gave a double portion; for he loved Hannah, but the LORD had shut up her womb.[4] And her rival[5] vexed her sore, to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb. And as he did so year by year, when she went up to the house of the LORD, so she vexed her; therefore she wept, and would not eat. And Elkanah her husband said unto her: "Hannah, why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? am not I better to thee than ten sons?"

David and Jonathan. The book ends with the defeat of Saul by the Philistines and his death by suicide.

The following additional selections from 1 Samuel are recommended for reading:

a. The Child Samuel Hears the Voice of God (Chap. 3).
b. Saul's Victory over the Ammonites (Chap. 11).
c. The Deeds of Jonathan (Chap. 14).
d. The Anointment of David and his Introduction to Saul (Chap. 16).
e. David and Abigail (Chap. 25^{2-42}).
f. Saul and the Witch of En-dor (Chap. 28^{3-25}).
g. David's Victory over the Amalekites (Chap. 30^{1-25}).

[1] *i.e.*, Ramah in the land of Zuph, Samuel's birthplace.

[2] "Lord of hosts" is taken to mean either "Lord of battles" or "Lord of the hosts of heaven (the stars) and earth (man and all creatures else)."

[3] *i.e.*, of the animal sacrificed. It was customary for a family or clan to feast together on those portions which were not burned or set aside for the priest.

[4] *i.e.*, she was childless.

[5] Peninah, the other wife.

So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore. And she vowed a vow, and said: "O LORD of hosts, if Thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of Thy handmaid, and remember me, and not forget Thy handmaid, but wilt give unto Thy handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head." [6]

And it came to pass, as she prayed long before the LORD, that Eli [7] watched her mouth. Now Hannah, she spoke in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice could not be heard; therefore Eli thought she had been drunken.[8] And Eli said unto her: "How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee." And Hannah answered and said: "No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit; I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I poured out my soul before the LORD. Count not thy handmaid for a wicked woman: for out of the abundance of my complaint and my vexation have I spoken hitherto."

Then Eli answered and said: "Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant thy petition that thou hast asked of Him." And she said: "Let thy servant find favor in thy sight." So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad.

And they rose up in the morning early, and worshiped before the LORD, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah; and the LORD remembered her. And it came to pass, when the time was come about, that Hannah bore a son; and she called his name Samuel: "because I have asked him of the LORD." [9]

And the man Elkanah, and all his house, went up to offer unto the LORD the yearly sacrifice,[10] and his vow. But Hannah went not up; for she said unto her husband: "Until the child be weaned, when I will bring him, that he may appear before

[6] *i.e.*, he was to be, like Samson, a Nazirite. (See p. 249).

[7] *i.e.*, the priest, who was sitting by the doorpost of the Tabernacle.

[8] It sometimes happened that too much wine was drunk at the feasts.

[9] *Sha'al*, the Hebrew word for "to ask" is not related to the name Samuel by etymology but by sound only. The meaning of *Samuel* is "The Lord has heard"—my prayer, of course.

[10] *i.e.*, the following year.

the LORD, and there abide forever." [11] And Elkanah her husband said unto her: "Do what seemeth thee good; tarry until thou have weaned him; only the LORD establish His word."

So the woman tarried and gave her son suck, until she weaned him. And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with three bullocks, and one ephah of meal, and a bottle of wine, and brought him unto the house of the LORD in Shiloh; and the child was young. And when the bullock was slain, the child was brought to Eli. And she said: "Oh, my lord, as thy soul liveth, my lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the LORD. For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath granted me my petition which I asked of him; therefore I also have lent him to the LORD; as long as he liveth he is lent to the LORD." [12] And he worshiped the LORD there.

2. THE CAPTURE OF THE ARK AND THE DEATH OF ELI

(1 SAMUEL 4)

THE battle of Aphek, where the Philistines captured the Ark of the Covenant, marked a turning point in the history of Israel. The momentous and tragic character of the event is conveyed with tense dramatic power in the following narrative with its climax in the death of Eli and of his daughter-in-law who dies in premature childbirth.

NOW Israel went out against the Philistines to battle, and pitched beside Eben-ezer; and the Philistines pitched in Aphek.[13] And the Philistines put themselves in array against Israel; and when the battle was spread, Israel was smitten before the Philistines; and they slew of the army in the field [14] about four thousand men.

And when the people were come into the camp, the elders of Israel said: "Wherefore hath the LORD smitten us to-day before

[11] In accordance with her vow.

[12] *i.e.*, Samuel is dedicated to the Lord.

[13] Believed to have been located in the Plain of Sharon at a point from which it was possible to penetrate into the central range.

[14] Where the chariots of the Philistines could come into full play.

the Philistines? Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of Shiloh unto us, that He may come among us, and save us out of the hand of our enemies."

So the people sent to Shiloh, and they brought from thence the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, who sitteth upon the cherubim;[15] and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God. And when the ark of the covenant of the LORD came into the camp, all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang.

And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shout, they said: "What meaneth the noise of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews?" And they knew that the ark of the LORD was come into the camp. And the Philistines were afraid, for they said: "God is come into the camp." And they said: "Woe unto us! for there was not such a thing yesterday and the day before.[16] Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty gods? these are the gods that smote the Egyptians with all manner of plagues and in the wilderness.[17] Be strong and quit yourselves like men, O ye Philistines, that ye be not servants unto the Hebrews, as they have been to you; quit yourselves like men, and fight."

And the Philistines fought, and Israel was smitten, and they fled every man to his tent; and there was a very great slaughter; for there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen. And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain.

And there ran a man of Benjamin out of the army, and came to Shiloh the same day with his clothes rent, and with earth upon his head.[18] And when he came, lo, Eli sat upon his seat by the wayside watching; for his heart trembled for the ark of God. And when the man came into the city, and told it, all the city cried out. And when Eli heard the noise of the crying,

[15] The cherubim, of whom there were two, were winged forms, symbolizing the storm clouds, and conceived of as bearing the throne of God.

[16] *i.e.*, this thing has never happened before.

[17] Note the heathen manner in which the Philistines speak of the "Hebrew gods."

[18] Rent clothing and earth or ashes strewn on the head are the signs of mourning.

he said: "What meaneth the noise of this tumult?" And the man made haste, and came and told Eli. Now Eli was ninety and eight years old; and his eyes were set, that he could not see. And the man said unto Eli: "I am he that came out of the army, and I fled to-day out of the army." And he said: "How went the matter, my son?" And he that brought the tidings answered and said: "Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there hath been also a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God is taken."

And it came to pass, when he made mention of the ark of God, that he fell from off his seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck broke, and he died; for he was an old man, and heavy. And he had judged Israel forty years.

And his daughter-in-law, Phinehas' wife, was with child, near to be delivered; and when she heard the tidings that the ark of God was taken, and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she bowed herself and brought forth; for her pains came suddenly upon her. And about the time of her death the women that stood by her said unto her: "Fear not; for thou has brought forth a son." But she answered not, neither did she regard it.

And she named the child Ichabod,[19] saying: "The glory is departed from Israel," because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father-in-law and her husband. And she said: "The glory is departed from Israel; for the ark of God is taken."

[19] Hebrew for "There is no glory."

3. THE ANOINTMENT OF SAUL

(1 Samuel 9–10[1])

THE climax of this narrative, the anointment of a king, is of epic importance, but the event itself is thrown against the background of a charming idyl in which the simple labor, beliefs and worship of a farmer folk stand out in brilliant relief.

NOW there was a man of Benjamin, whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Becorath, the son of Aphiah, the son of a Benjamite, a mighty man of valor.[20] And he had a son, whose name was Saul, young and goodly, and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people.

Now the asses of Kish Saul's father were lost. And Kish said to Saul his son: "Take now one of the servants with thee, and arise, go seek the asses." And he passed through the hill country of Ephraim, and passed through the land of Shalishah, but they found them not; then they passed through the land of Shaalim, and there they were not; and he passed through the land of the Benjamites, but they found them not.

When they were come to the land of Zuph,[21] Saul said to his servant that was with him: "Come and let us return; lest my father leave caring for the asses, and become anxious concerning us." And he said unto him: "Behold now, there is in this city a man of God, and he is a man that is held in honor; all that he saith cometh surely to pass; now let us go thither; peradventure he can tell us concerning our journey whereon we go."

Then said Saul to his servant: "But, behold, if we go, what shall we bring the man? for the bread is spent in our vessels, and there is not a present to bring to the man of God; what have we?"[22] And the servant answered Saul again, and said:

[20] "Man of valor" means here a wealthy man or large landowner.

[21] Where Ramah, city of Samuel, was located.

[22] It is clear from this passage that it was customary to give the seer a fee for his services.

"Behold, I have in my hand the fourth part of a shekel of silver, that will I give to the man of God, to tell us our way." Then said Saul to his servant: "Well said; come, let us go."

So they went unto the city where the man of God was. As they went up the ascent to the city, they found young maidens going out to draw water, and said unto them: "Is the seer here?" And they answered them, and said: "He is; behold, he is before thee; make haste now, for he is come to-day into the city; for the people have a sacrifice to-day in the high place. As soon as ye are come into the city, ye shall straightway find him, before he go up to the high place to eat; for the people will not eat until he come, because he doth bless the sacrifice; and afterwards they eat that are bidden.[23] Now therefore get you up; for at this time ye shall find him." And they went up to the city; and as they came within the city, behold, Samuel came out toward them, to go up to the high place.

Now the LORD had revealed unto Samuel a day before Saul came, saying: "To-morrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be prince over My people Israel, and he shall save My people out of the hand of the Philistines; for I have looked upon My people,[24] because their cry is come unto Me." And when Samuel saw Saul, the LORD spoke unto him: "Behold the man of whom I said unto thee: This same shall have authority over My people."

Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said: "Tell me, I pray thee, where the seer's house is." And Samuel answered Saul, and said: "I am the seer; go up before me unto the high place, for ye shall eat with me to-day; and in the morning I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that is in thy heart.[25] And as for thine asses that were lost three days ago, set not thy mind on them; for they are found. And on whom is all the desire of Israel? Is it not on thee, and on all thy father's

[23] Invited.

[24] *i.e.*, I have looked with compassion upon them.

[25] From the sentence that follows it is clear that the things which Samuel is to tell him are matters of much greater importance than the loss of the asses.

house?" And Saul answered and said: "Am not I a Benjamite of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? wherefore then speakest thou to me after this manner?"

And Samuel took Saul and his servant, and brought them into the chamber,[26] and made them sit in the chiefest place among them that were bidden, who were about thirty persons. And Samuel said unto the cook: "Bring the portion which I gave thee, of which I said unto thee: Set it by thee." [27] And the cook took up the thigh, and that which was upon it, and set it before Saul. And (Samuel) said: "Behold that which hath been reserved! set it before thee and eat; because unto the appointed time hath it been kept for thee, for I said: I have invited the people." So Saul did eat with Samuel that day.

And when they were come down from the high place into the city, he spoke with Saul upon the housetop.[28] And they arose early; and it came to pass about the break of day, that Samuel called to Saul on the housetop, saying: "Up, that I may send thee away." And Saul arose, and they went out both of them, he and Samuel, abroad. As they were going down at the end of the city, Samuel said to Saul: "Bid the servant pass on before us"—and he passed on—"but stand thou still this time, that I may cause thee to hear the word of God."

Then Samuel took the vial of oil and poured it upon his head,[29] and kissed him, and said: "Is it not that the LORD hath anointed thee to be prince over His inheritance?"

[26] The dining hall, where the sacrificial feast was eaten.

[27] *i.e.*, reserve it.

[28] The roof where Saul slept.

[29] The custom of anointing a king with oil was widely practiced and seems to have had its origin in Egypt. The person of the "Lord's anointed" became inviolable.

4. THE STORY OF DAVID AND GOLIATH

(1 Samuel 17 1-54)

ALL the elements that give a story an everlasting popular appeal are to be found in this one. At the same time, also, it appeals to the higher moral sense, so that the combat between the giant Goliath and the youthful David has become a symbol of the struggle between meek righteousness and blustering wickedness, between him who puts his trust in God and him who relies on the strength of his weapons. The story, from the suspense of the preliminary events to the great climax, is here told with perfect literary skill.

NOW the Philistines gathered together their armies to battle, and they were gathered together at Socoh, which belongeth to Judah, and pitched between Socoh and Azekah, in Ephes-dammim. And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and pitched in the vale of Elah, and set the battle in array against the Philistines.[30] And the Philistines stood on the mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on the mountain on the other side; and there was a valley between them.

And there went out a champion from the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.[31] And he had a helmet of brass upon his head, and he was clad with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass.[32] And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a javelin of brass between his shoulders. And the shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron; and his shield bearer went before him.

And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them: "Why do ye come out to set your battle in array? am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to

[30] The battle-field has been identified as located in the western foothills of the central range in Judea.

[31] A cubit was nearly eighteen inches; a span was half a cubit. Thus Goliath stood about nine and a half feet tall.

[32] Probably about two hundred and twenty pounds.

fight with me, and kill me, then will we be your servants; but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us." And the Philistine said: "I do taunt the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together." And when Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid.

Now David was the son of that Ephrathite[33] of Beth-lehem in Judah, whose name was Jesse; and he had eight sons; and the man was an old man in the days of Saul, stricken in years among men. And the three eldest sons of Jesse had gone after Saul to the battle; and the names of his three sons that went to the battle were Eliab the first-born, and next unto him Abinadab, and the third Shammah. And David was the youngest; and the three eldest followed Saul. (Now David went to and fro from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Beth-lehem.)[34] And the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and presented himself forty days.

And Jesse said unto David his son: "Take now for thy brethren an ephah[35] of this parched corn, and these ten loaves, and carry them quickly to the camp to thy brethren. And bring these ten cheeses unto the captain of their thousand,[36] and to thy brethren shalt thou bring greetings, and take their pledge;[37] now Saul, and they, and all the men of Israel, are in the vale of Elah, fighting with the Philistines."

And David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper, and took, and went, as Jesse had commanded him; and he came to the barricade,[38] as the host which was going forth to the fight shouted for the battle. And Israel and the Philistines put the battle in array, army against army. And David left his baggage in the hand of the keeper of the baggage, and ran to the army, and came and greeted his brethren.

And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the cham-

[33] Ephrath was another name for Beth-lehem.

[34] David had already become Saul's armor-bearer.

[35] About a bushel.

[36] The "thousand" was the largest military unit.

[37] The "pledge" is here some evidence that would show the father that his sons were alive and well.

[38] Where the camp began.

pion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, out of the ranks of the Philistines, and spoke according to the same words; and David heard them. And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid. And the men of Israel said: "Have ye seen this man that is come up? surely to taunt Israel is he come up; and it shall be, that the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel." [39]

And David spoke to the men that stood by him, saying: "What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the taunt from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine; [40] that he should have taunted the armies of the living God?" And the people answered him after this manner, saying: "So shall it be done to the man that killeth him."

And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spoke unto the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said: "Why art thou come down? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy presumptuousness, and the naughtiness of thy heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle." [41] And David said: "What have I now done? Was it not but a word?" And he turned away from him toward another, and spoke after the same manner; and the people answered him after the former manner.

And when the words were heard which David spoke, they rehearsed them before Saul; and he was taken to him. And David said to Saul: "Let no man's heart fail within him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine." And Saul said to David: "Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth." And David said unto Saul: "Thy servant kept his father's sheep; and when there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock, I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth; and when he arose against

[39] *i.e.*, exempt from taxes or dues of any sort.

[40] An expression of contempt. The Philistines, who were not Semites, were the only people in Palestine who did not practice circumcision.

[41] Just the manner in which one speaks to one's "little brother."

me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant smote both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath taunted the armies of the living God." And David said: "The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said unto David: "Go, and the LORD shall be with thee."

And Saul clad David with his apparel,[42] and he put a helmet of brass upon his head, and he clad him with a coat of mail. And David girded his sword upon his apparel, and he essayed to go, (but could not); for he had not tried it.[43] And David said unto Saul: "I cannot go with these; for I have not tried them." And David put them off him. And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in the shepherd's bag which he had, even in his scrip;[44] and his sling was in his hand; and he drew near to the Philistine.

And the Philistine came nearer and nearer unto David; and the man that bore the shield went before him. And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him; for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and withal of a fair countenance. And the Philistine said unto David: "Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves?" And the Philistine cursed David by his god. And the Philistine said to David: "Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field."

Then said David to the Philistine: "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a javelin; but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast taunted. This day will the LORD deliver thee into my hand; and I will smite thee, and take thy head from off thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a

[42] *i.e.*, his armor.

[43] David was unaccustomed to the heavy armor.

[44] The scrip, as explained in the text itself, is the "shepherd's bag."

God in Israel; and that all this assembly may know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear; for the battle is the LORD's, and he will give you into our hand."

And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hastened, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slung it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead; and the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell upon his face to the earth. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David.

And David ran, and stood over the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw that their mighty man was dead, they fled. And the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines, until thou comest to Gai,[45] and to the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way to Shaaraim, even unto Gath, and unto Ekron. And the children of Israel returned from chasing after the Philistines, and they spoiled their camp. And David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem; but he put his armor in his tent.

[45] Gai is, no doubt, the same as Gath.

5. THE FRIENDSHIP OF DAVID AND JONATHAN

(1 Samuel 18[1-11]; 19[1-18]; 20–21[1])

THIS is the story of two brave and noble youths who conceive an affection for each other that rises above all considerations of self-interest and outlasts life itself. The friendship of David and Jonathan has become proverbial. The Bible, which is a book of human passions, reveals few relationships that are more affecting than this love between the young Judean shepherd and the king's son.

AND it came to pass that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. And Saul took him that day;[46] and would let him go no more home to his father's house.

Then Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his apparel,[47] even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.

And David went out; whithersoever Saul sent him, he had good success; and Saul set him over the men of war; and it was good in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants.

And it came to pass as they came, when David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with timbrels, with joy, and with three-stringed instruments. And the women sang one to another in their play, and said:

Saul hath slain his thousands,
And David his ten thousands.

And Saul was very wroth, and this saying displeased him; and he said: "They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands; and all he lacketh is the kingdom!" And Saul eyed David from that day and forward.[48]

[46] The day of his victory over Goliath.

[47] *i.e.*, his armor.

[48] *i.e.*, he eyed him with jealousy and suspicion.

And it came to pass on the morrow, that an evil spirit from God came mightily upon Saul, and he raved in the midst of the house; and David played with his hand, as he did day by day; and Saul had his spear in his hand. And Saul cast the spear; for he said: "I will smite David even to the wall." And David stepped aside out of his presence twice.

And Saul spoke to Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, that they should slay David; but Jonathan Saul's son delighted much in David. And Jonathan told David, saying: "Saul my father seeketh to slay thee; now therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself in the morning, and abide in a secret place, and hide thyself. And I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where thou art, and I will speak with my father of thee; and if I see aught, I will tell thee."

And Jonathan spoke good of David unto Saul his father, and said unto him: "Let not the king sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his work hath been very good toward thee; for he put his life in his hand, and smote the Philistine, and the LORD wrought a great victory for all Israel; thou sawest it, and didst rejoice; wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause?"

And Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan; and Saul swore: "As the LORD liveth, he shall not be put to death." And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan told him all those things. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence as beforetime.

And there was war again; and David went out, and fought with the Philistines, and slew them with a great slaughter; and they fled before him. And an evil spirit from the LORD was upon Saul, as he sat in his house with his spear in his hand; and David was playing with his hand. And Saul sought to smite David even to the wall with the spear; but he slipped away out of Saul's presence, and he smote the spear into the wall; and David fled, and escaped that night.

And Saul sent messengers unto David's house, to watch him, and to slay him in the morning; and Michal, David's wife, told him, saying: "If thou save not thy life to-night, to-morrow thou

shalt be slain." So Michal let David down through the window; and he went, and fled, and escaped.

And Michal took the teraphim,[49] and laid it in the bed, and put a quilt of goats' hair at the head thereof, and covered it with a cloth. And when Saul sent messengers to take David, she said: "He is sick."

And Saul sent the messengers to see David, saying: "Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may slay him." And when the messengers came in, behold, the teraphim was in the bed, with the quilt of goats' hair at the head thereof. And Saul said unto Michal: "Why hast thou deceived me thus, and let mine enemy go, that he is escaped?" And Michal answered Saul: "He said unto me: Let me go; why should I kill thee?"

Now David fled, and escaped, and came to Samuel to Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and dwelt in Naioth.

And David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and came and said before Jonathan: "What have I done? what is mine iniquity? and what is my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life?" And he said unto him: "Far from it; thou shalt not die; behold, my father doeth nothing either great or small, but that he discloseth it unto me; and why should my father hide this thing from me? it is not so."

And David swore moreover, and said: "Thy father knoweth well that I have found favor in thine eyes; and he saith: Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved; but truly as the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death."

Then said Jonathan unto David: "What doth thy soul desire, that I should do it for thee?" And David said unto Jonathan: "Behold, to-morrow is the new moon,[50] when I should sit with the king to eat; so let me go, that I may hide myself in the field unto the third day at even. If thy father miss me at all,

[49] A survival of idolatry which persisted at times side by side with the worship of the invisible God. The teraphim was a household god made of wood in human shape.

[50] The day when the new moon was first seen was observed as a festival when families and clans gathered to feast together.

then say: David earnestly asked leave of me that he might run to Beth-lehem his city; for it is the yearly sacrifice there for all the family. If he say thus: It is well; thy servant shall have peace; but if he be wroth, then know that evil is determined by him. Therefore deal kindly with thy servant; for thou hast brought thy servant into a covenant of the LORD with thee; but if there be in me iniquity, slay me thyself; for why shouldest thou bring me to thy father?"

And Jonathan said: "Far be it from thee; for if I should at all know that evil were determined by my father to come upon thee, then would not I tell it thee?" Then said David to Jonathan: "Who shall tell me if perchance thy father answer thee roughly?" And Jonathan said unto David: "Come and let us go out into the field." And they went out both of them into the field.

And Jonathan said unto David: "The LORD, the God of Israel [51]—when I have sounded my father about this time to-morrow, or the third day, behold, if there be good toward David, shall I not then send unto thee, and disclose it unto thee? The LORD do so to Jonathan, and more also, should it please my father to do thee evil, if I disclose it not unto thee, and send thee away, that thou mayest go in peace; and the LORD be with thee, as He hath been with my father. And thou shalt not only while yet I live show me the kindness of the LORD, that I die not; but also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house forever; no, not when the LORD hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth." So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David: "The LORD even require it at the hand of David's enemies." [52] And Jonathan caused David to swear again, for the love that he had to him; for he loved him as he loved his own soul.

And Jonathan said unto him: "To-morrow is the new moon; and thou wilt be missed, because thy seat will be empty. And in the third day thou shalt hide thyself well, and come to the place where thou didst hide thyself in the day of work,[53] and

[51] *i.e.*, the Lord be witness.

[52] *i.e.*, May the Lord cause the enemies of David to avenge me if David cuts off my house.

[53] What work or day is meant here is not clear.

shalt remain by the stone Ezel. And I will shoot three arrows to the side-ward, as though I shot at a mark. And, behold, I will send the lad: Go, find the arrows. If I say unto the lad: Behold, the arrows are on this side of thee; take them, and come; for there is peace to thee and no hurt, as the LORD liveth. But if I say thus unto the boy: Behold, the arrows are beyond thee; go thy way; for the LORD hath sent thee away.[54] And as touching the matter which I and thou have spoken of,[55] behold, the LORD is between me and thee forever."

So David hid himself in the field; and when the new moon was come, the king sat him down to the meal to eat. And the king sat upon his seat, as at other times, even upon the seat by the wall; and Jonathan stood up, and Abner sat by Saul's side; but David's place was empty. Nevertheless Saul spoke not anything that day; for he thought: "Something hath befallen him, he is unclean; surely he is not clean." [56]

And it came to pass on the morrow after the new moon, which was the second day, that David's place was empty; and Saul said unto Jonathan his son: "Wherefore cometh not the son of Jesse to the meal, neither yesterday, nor to-day?" And Jonathan answered Saul: "David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Bethlehem; and he said: Let me go, I pray thee; for our family hath a sacrifice in the city; and my brother, he hath commanded me; and now, if I have found favor in thine eyes, let me get away, I pray thee, and see my brethren. Therefore he is not come unto the king's table."

Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said unto him: "Thou son of perverse rebellion, do not I know that thou hast chosen the son of Jesse to thine own shame? For as

[54] The arrangement by which Jonathan will inform David concerning the king's intentions is, in other words, as follows: Jonathan, accompanied by a lad, is to shoot some arrows. If David, in his hiding place by the stone, hears Jonathan say to the lad: "The arrows are this side of the stone," it means that all is well. If, however, he hears Jonathan say: "The arrows are beyond the stone," then David must flee for his life.

[55] *i.e.*, the oath of eternal friendship.

[56] *i.e.*, he is not clean according to the scrupulous Mosaic code of personal cleanliness. At such times a man was not to appear among his fellows. (See Leviticus 15^{16}.)

long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the earth, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom. Wherefore now send and fetch him unto me, for he deserveth to die."

And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said unto him: "Wherefore should he be put to death? what hath he done?" And Saul cast his spear at him to smite him; whereby Jonathan knew that it was determined of his father to put David to death. So Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger, and did eat no food the second day of the month; for he was grieved for David, and because his father had put him to shame.

And it came to pass in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the field at the time appointed with David, and a little lad with him. And he said unto his lad: "Run, find now the arrows which I shoot." And as the lad ran, he shot an arrow beyond him. And when the lad was come to the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried after the lad, and said: "Is not the arrow beyond thee?" And Jonathan cried after the lad: "Make speed, hasten, stay not." And Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows, and came to his master. But the lad knew not any thing; only Jonathan and David knew the matter. And Jonathan gave his weapons unto his lad, and said unto him: "Go, carry them to the city."

And as soon as the lad was gone, David arose out of a place toward the south, and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed down three times; and they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded. And Jonathan said to David: "Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the LORD, saying: The LORD shall be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed, forever." And he arose and departed; and Jonathan went into the city.

6. THE FUGITIVE SPARES HIS PURSUER

(1 Samuel 26)

THE following is an account of the second of the two incidents when King Saul is at the mercy of David, the man he seeks to slay, and David refuses to "put forth his hand against the Lord's anointed." It is a tense story told with a sure sense of its dramatic values, and fine insight into the characters of the actors.

AND the Ziphites came unto Saul to Gibeah, saying: "Doth not David hide himself in the hill of Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon?" [57] Then Saul arose, and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, having three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph. And Saul pitched in the hill of Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon, by the way.

But David abode in the wilderness, and he saw that Saul came after him into the wilderness. David therefore sent out spies, and understood that Saul was come of a certainty. And David arose, and came to the place where Saul had pitched; [58] and David beheld the place where Saul lay, and Abner the son of Ner, the captain of his host; and Saul lay within the barricade, and the people pitched round about him.

Then answered David and said to Ahimelech the Hittite,[59] and to Abishai the son of Zeruiah, brother to Joab, saying: "Who will go down with me to Saul to the camp?" And Abishai said: "I will go down with thee." So David and Abishai came to the people by night; and, behold, Saul lay sleeping within the barricade, with his spear stuck in the ground at his head; and Abner and the people lay round about him.

Then said Abishai to David: "God hath delivered up thine enemy into thy hand this day; now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear to the earth at one stroke, and I will not smite him the second time." And David said to Abishai:

[57] A hill overlooking the Wilderness of Judah or Ziph, lying between the Central Range and the Dead Sea.

[58] His tent, of course.

[59] No doubt an adventurer who had attached himself to David.

"Destroy him not; for who can put forth his hand against the LORD'S anointed, and be guiltless?" And David said: "As the LORD liveth, nay, but the LORD shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall go down into battle, and be swept away. The LORD forbid it me, that I should put forth my hand against the LORD'S anointed; but now take, I pray thee, the spear that is at his head, and the cruse of water and let us go."

So David took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's head; and they got them away, and no man saw it, nor knew it, neither did any awake; for they were all asleep; because a deep sleep from the LORD was fallen upon them.

Then David went over to the other side, and stood on the top of the mountain afar off; a great space being between them. And David cried to the people, and to Abner the son of Ner, saying: "Answerest thou not, Abner?" Then Abner answered and said: "Who art thou that criest to the king?" And David said to Abner: "Art not thou a valiant man? and who is like to thee in Israel? wherefore then hast thou not kept watch over thy lord the king? for there came one of the people in to destroy the king thy lord. This thing is not good that thou hast done. As the LORD liveth, ye deserve to die, because ye have not kept watch over your lord, the LORD'S anointed. And now, see, where the king's spear is, and the cruse of water that was at his head."

And Saul knew David's voice, and said, "Is this thy voice, my son David?" And David said: "It is my voice, my lord, O king." And he said: "Wherefore doth my lord pursue after his servant? for what have I done? or what evil is in my hand? Now therefore, I pray thee, let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If it be the LORD that hath stirred thee up against me, let Him accept an offering; but if it be the children of men, cursed be they before the LORD; for they have driven me out this day that I should not cleave unto the inheritance of the LORD, saying: Go, serve other gods. Now therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth away from the presence of the LORD;[60] for the king of Israel is come out to seek a single flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains."

[60] *i.e.*, let me not die in a strange land.

Then said Saul: "I have sinned; return, my son David; for I will no more do thee harm, because my life was precious in thine eyes this day; behold, I have played the fool and erred exceedingly." And David answered and said: "Behold the king's spear! let then one of the young men come over and fetch it. And the LORD will render to every man his righteousness and his faithfulness; forasmuch as the LORD delivered thee into my hand to-day, and I would not put forth my hand against the LORD's anointed. And, behold, as thy life was much set by this day in mine eyes, so let my life be much set by in the eyes of the LORD, and let him deliver me out of all tribulation."

Then Saul said to David: "Blessed be thou, my son David; thou shalt both do mightily, and shalt surely prevail." So David went his way, and Saul returned to his place.

7. SAUL'S LAST BATTLE

(1 SAMUEL 31)

NOW the Philistines fought against Israel, and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in Mount Gilboa. And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchi-shua, the sons of Saul.

And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers overtook him; and he was in great anguish by reason of the archers. Then said Saul to his armor-bearer: "Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised [61] come and thrust me through, and make a mock of me." But his armor-bearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took his sword, and fell upon it. And when his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he likewise fell upon his sword, and died with him. So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armor-bearer, and all his men, that same day together.

And when the men of Israel that were on the other side of the valley,[62] and they that were beyond the Jordan, saw that the men

[61] See note 40, p. 319.

[62] North of the Valley of Jezreel.

of Israel fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook the cities, and fled; and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.

And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen in Mount Gilboa. And they cut off his head, and stripped off his armor, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to carry the tidings unto the house of their idols, and to the people. And they put his armor in the house of the Ashtaroth;[63] and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan.

And when the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead[64] heard concerning him that which the Philistines had done to Saul, all the valiant men arose, and went all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth-shan; and they came to Jabesh, and burned them there. And they took their bones, and buried them under the tamarisk tree in Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

[63] *i.e.*, the temple of the goddess Astarte. Such a temple has been recently excavated at Beisan, the modern village over the ancient Beth-shan.

[64] Whom Saul, in the beginning of his career, had saved from their enemies.

END OF VOLUME ONE

OUTLINE OF JEWISH KNOWLEDGE

Volume 1

COURSE OF STUDY

PREFACE TO COURSE OF STUDY

THE "Outline of Jewish Knowledge" is intended primarily for young people who desire to achieve at least the rudiments of a Jewish education and are willing to study in order to attain it. For their assistance, the authors have prepared the following Course of Study.

It is estimated that four to five hours of study a week will enable the student to finish three volumes a year. In four years, therefore, he will have completed the Outline. He will then be in possession of a store of knowledge consisting of the history of the Jewish people from the earliest times to the present, some acquaintance with the history and civilization of the nations with whom the Jews have come into contact, the geography of the different lands in which the Jews have lived, the beliefs and modes of life of the Jewish people at different periods, and their present-day status and problems throughout the world. In addition, he will have a fair acquaintance with the entire range of Jewish literature, from the Bible to the contemporary writers in Hebrew, Yiddish and other languages.

The Course of Study which follows consists of four parts. The first is a summary of the text of the topic written in brief sentences, each one aiming to embody an important fact. The second consists of questions on the text and on the literature, including map work. These questions are designed to stimulate thinking and to compel the organization of the knowledge acquired. The third part of the Course offers a number of subjects for essays, for the further organization of the knowledge acquired and for the stimulation of the imagination. The fourth consists of suggestions for additional reading. This part, it should be noted, does not pretend to be a bibliography. It proposes only such readings as the student will find interesting as well as helpful.

In writing the "Outline of Jewish Knowledge" the authors have striven to present vividly the career of the Jewish people and the facts of Jewish life. The student should first read his assignment, both text and literature, for pleasure and appreciation. He should then study the summary for a mastery of the facts. The next step should be answering the questions as an exercise in self-examination. The essay is, of course, the final and most important test of all.

I. G.
S. B.

COURSE OF STUDY

TOPIC ONE

A Nation Is Born

A. Summary. B. Questions on (*a*) Text and (*b*) Literature. C. Subjects for Essays. D. Suggestions for Additional Reading.

A. SUMMARY

§ 1. About 4000 years ago, the first Hebrew Patriarch, Abraham, led a band of nomad shepherds from Mesopotamia into Canaan. Thus began the career of the Jewish people. His place of origin had been Ur in Babylonia. With Abraham tradition associates two facts of vast spiritual importance. The first is the fact that Abraham was the first monotheist, or believer in One God. The second is the Great Covenant, by which God promised the Land of Canaan to Abraham and his descendants forever.

Beginnings of Jewish History

The Hebrews may have been part of a larger movement of nomads from the desert of Arabia into the so-called "Fertile Crescent."

§ 2. This "Crescent" is a great strip of fertile land that bends above the Arabian Peninsula from the Persian Gulf to the desert of Sinai. Its western end is Canaan, later called Palestine. Its eastern half, or Mesopotamia, is watered by the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers. Here flourished a number of great civilizations, including that of Sumeria and Babylonia.

The "Fertile Crescent"

§ 3. The first inhabitants of Mesopotamia of whom we have knowledge were the Sumerians. The Plain of Shinar near the Persian Gulf became dotted with their city kingdoms. They built enormous temple towers to their gods. They developed the cuneiform, or wedge-shaped, system of writing on clay tablets. In time, their writing, as well as their calendar and system of weights and measures, spread throughout the "Fertile Crescent."

The Sumerians

About 2750 B.C.E., the Akkadians, a Semitic nomad people, penetrated into the Plain of Shinar. Their great leader was Sargon. The land became known as "Sumer and Akkad." Five centuries later came still another large wave of Semitic invaders, the Amorites. Babylon, one of the cities held by them, gradually fought its way to supremacy. About 2050 B.C.E., the age of Abraham, their greatest king, Hammurabi, consolidated the country, which may now be called Babylonia. Hammurabi was an able administrator and legislator. Babylonian influence extended throughout the "Fertile Crescent."

Sargon and Hammurabi

The Babylonian religion and civilization drew largely from the Sumerian. The chief god of Babylonia was Marduk, the city god of Babylon. Ishtar (Astarte) was the chief goddess. Various ideas and traditions made their way from the Sumerians, through the Babylonians, to the Hebrews. But the Hebrews, by their peculiar genius, purified and spiritualized those traditions. Among them are the account of creation, of the Tower of Babel, of the Great Flood. The differences between Hebrew and Babylonian ideas are much more important than their resemblances. The Babylonians thought of their gods, for example, as blind forces of nature, indifferent to justice and righteousness. The Hebrews, on the contrary, thought of God as righteous and purposeful, loving justice and hating wickedness.

Babylonians and Hebrews

Not long after Hammurabi, Babylonia became a prey to new invaders. The country fell into ruin. In the meantime, on the other end of the "Fertile Crescent," the Hebrews pursued their career.

Decline of Babylonia

§ 4. Abraham, in the manner of a grand nomad sheik, wandered with his numerous household and flocks through Canaan. He even stopped for a brief period in Egypt. In his old age, his wife Sarah bore him a son, Isaac. The story of the near-sacrifice of Isaac reveals the revolution in the mind of the Hebrews against human sacrifice. When Sarah died, Abraham bought the cave of Machpelah at Hebron as his family sepulcher. There, in time, his son Isaac laid him to rest. In Jewish tradition, Abraham is a towering but intensely human figure, peace-loving, compassionate, generous, wise and God-fearing.

Abraham

His son, Isaac, became the leader of the Hebrew nomads, the second Patriarch. To keep the line pure he had married his cousin Rebekah. She bore him two sons, Jacob and Esau. Under Isaac, the Hebrews continued to grow in wealth and numbers.

Isaac

The pure Hebrew line was continued by Jacob who married his cousins, Rachel and Leah. On the death of Isaac, Jacob, therefore, became the third Patriarch. He was the father of twelve sons, each one of whom became the head of a family or clan. Jacob was also called Israel, and his descendants the children of Israel. Though confining their movements to Canaan, the children of Israel continued, in the main, to lead the peculiar life of the nomad.

Jacob or Israel

§ 5. Nomads are wandering shepherds. Their homes are tents. Their food consists of milk and meat. Their two greatest needs are pasture and water for their flocks of sheep and goats.

The Nomad's Livelihood

The social unit of the nomad is the family. A group of families, recognizing a common ancestor, make up a clan. A number of related clans make up a tribe. The nomad has no state and no police. He pays no taxes. The patriarch, or sheik, is the leader, the judge, and often, also, the priest. "Blood revenge" is a virtue and a duty. The same is true of hospitality. A nomad society is democratic. The nomad is independent and self-reliant. The tribe is a well-knit unit, but union with other tribes is difficult and rare.

His Social Fabric

The nomad's religion included a large variety of gods, local and tribal. He had also his household gods or *teraphim,* which may have been vestiges of ancestor worship. His gods were hard and cruel. They demanded frequent sacrifices, including, sometimes, the sacrifice of children.

His Religion

§ 6. Among the Hebrew nomads, of course, religion took a wholly different course. Hence the uniqueness and importance of their history. The belief in One God remained alive, at least in the household of the Patriarch.

The Hebrews Unique

Gradually, the Hebrews in Canaan begin to till the soil and adopt some of the other ways of their settled neighbors. But a break occurs in their association with Canaan. It happens that Joseph, Jacob's favorite son, is sold by his jealous brothers into slavery in Egypt. A terrible famine strikes Egypt and Canaan. By his wis-

The Hebrews Settle in Egypt

dom and foresight, Joseph saves Egypt from its effects. When Jacob's sons go down to Egypt to buy corn, Joseph recognizes his brothers. A reconciliation takes place. On Joseph's invitation, seconded by the Pharaoh, Jacob and all his household and flocks proceed to Egypt. There they settle as shepherds in the fertile region of Goshen.

B. QUESTIONS

a. TEXT

§ 1. *Abraham*

1. Explain the origin of the name "Hebrew."

2. What was the Great Covenant? How was it destined to influence the history of the Jewish people?

3. What causes impel one nomad group to separate from another?

4. What great religious advance is associated with the name of Abraham?

5. Trace the course of Abraham's wanderings from Ur to Beer-sheba.

6. In what important respects did the Hebrew nomads differ from the inhabitants of the lands through which they passed?

7. Point out the importance to the Jewish people of the fact that Palestine was the bridge between Egypt and Babylonia.

§ 2. *The "Fertile Crescent"*

8. What is the "Fertile Crescent?" Why is a knowledge of its geography important in the study of Jewish history?

9. Draw a map of the "Fertile Crescent" and the adjacent regions, indicating the Tigris, Euphrates and Nile Rivers; the Plain of Shinar and Lebanon Mountains; Mesopotamia, Babylonia, Assyria, Syria (the resemblance between these two names is a mere accident), Canaan and Egypt; the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea; Ur, Nineveh, Haran, Damascus and Jerusalem.

10. Explain how the geography of the "Fertile Crescent" and of the regions north and south of it influenced its history.

§ 3. *Sumeria and Babylonia*

11. Who were the Sumerians? How were their cities ruled and defended?

12. State two Hebrew traditions that have been traced to Sumerian origins.

13. Discuss the Sumerian system of writing, describing the writing material they used and the writing symbols they developed.

14. Give two other features of Sumerian civilization which came down to other nations.

15. Who were the Akkadians? What other Semitic peoples appear in our story? What Semitic peoples exist to-day?

16. Describe the relations that arose between the Akkadians and Sumerians.

17. Explain how the "Land of Sumer and Akkad" came to be called Babylonia.

18. Discuss Hammurabi as administrator and lawgiver.

19. Name the principal Babylonian gods. Explain the terms *shabattum* and *sheol.*

20. What are the basic differences between Babylonian and Hebrew religious conceptions?

21. What happened to Babylonia after the death of Hammurabi?

§ 4. *The Three Patriarchs*

22. Sketch the career of Abraham in Canaan, referring to his brief sojourn in Egypt, his separation from Lot, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the birth of Isaac, the marriage of Isaac, the death of Sarah and her burial, and his own death.

23. What religious significance is attached to the story of the near-sacrifice of Isaac?

24. Describe the character of Abraham as tradition portrays it.

25. Describe the position of Isaac in Canaan.

26. Sketch the career of Jacob, the third Patriarch, referring to his flight from his brother Esau, his sojourn in Mesopotamia, his marriage to Rachel and Leah, the sons that are born to him, and his return to Canaan.

27. How did the Hebrews come to be called "the children of Israel?"

28. Describe the relations that existed between the Hebrew nomads and the settled inhabitants of Canaan.

§ 5. *Nomadic Life*

29. How does the nomad obtain his livelihood? What does his wealth consist of? What are his two greatest needs?

30. Describe the social structure of a nomad group, referring to the family, the clan, the tribe and the sheik.

31. What are the chief traits of the nomad's character?

32. What is "blood revenge?" Why does the nomad regard it as a virtue and a duty?

33. How did hospitality come to be regarded by the nomad as another great virtue and duty?

34. Discuss the nomad's religion, referring to his gods, his sacrifices, and his holy places.

§ 6. *The Sons of Jacob*

35. In what way were the Hebrews like other nomads? In what way were they different?

36. Recount briefly the story of Joseph, referring to the jealousy of his brothers, his sale into Egypt, his rise to greatness in Egypt, and his reconciliation with his brothers.

b. LITERATURE

1. *The Creation*

1. What is an epic? Why may the Biblical account of creation be called an epic poem?

2. The Hebrew conception is that the Deity is beneficent and purposeful. Show that the Biblical account of creation contains that conception.

3. Point out the differences between the Hebrew and the Babylonian accounts of creation.

2. *The Testing of Abraham*

4. What incident represents the climax of this story?

5. What step forward in religious conceptions does this story represent?

3. *Eliezer and Rebekah*

6. Explain the following expressions: "Put thy hand under my thigh." "Send me good speed this day." "Let thy seed possess the gate of those that hate them."

7. What is "local color"? Give five items of "local color" that occur in this story.

8. How is the character of Rebekah's brother, Laban, brought out?

4. *Joseph and his Brothers*

9. Recount Joseph's two dreams.

10. How does the behavior of Reuben and Judah differ from that of the other brothers?

11. Explain the following expressions: "To see the nakedness of the land have ye come." "One brother is not." "Carry corn for the famine of your houses." "Their heart failed them." "Of my hand shalt thou require him."

12. Explain the following expressions: "He may seek occasion against us." "He lifted up his eyes." "As soon as the morning was light." "Far be it from us to do such a thing."

13. Explain the following expressions: "They rent their clothes." "Let not their anger burn against us." "You will bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave." "Ye shall eat the fat of the land."

14. Recount the incident that represents the climax of the story of Joseph and his brothers.

15. "The story of Joseph and his brothers throbs with pathos and passion, with human greatness and human weakness." Justify this statement by referring to definite incidents that illustrate pathos and passion, nobility and baseness.

C. SUBJECTS FOR ESSAYS

1. The Hebrew Patriarchs

This should be a story telling of the journeys and fortunes of the three Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It should, of course, mention the principal places they visited and indicate the differences between their mode of life and that of the settled inhabitants through whose lands they wandered.

2. The Nomad Looks on the City

Imagine yourself a nomad. One morning you steal away from your father's tent and make your way into the neighboring

city. Tell what you see there—walls, houses, streets, temples, bazaars, people—and how strange it all appears to you. Then, of course, you are a Hebrew nomad, and what do you think of the idol worship you see in the city? You are glad to get back to your own nomad camp. You prefer the nomad way of life after all. Why?

3. Mesopotamia, Home of Ancient Civilizations

Begin with a brief description of the geography of Mesopotamia as part of the "Fertile Crescent." Point out the importance of the two rivers. Then sketch very briefly the career of Sumeria, the "Land of Sumer and Akkad," and Babylonia through Hammurabi. Emphasize the civilization and culture that arose in the Land of the Two Rivers: the writing, the architecture, the art, the commerce, the laws, religion, etc. Show how this civilization and culture affected the Hebrews.

4. Joseph and His Brothers — A Magnificent Story

You have just finished reading the story of Joseph and his brothers and now you are to write a review of it. You are, as you should be, enthusiastic about it. Explain why it has impressed you so much: the plot, the intensely dramatic situations, the fine characterization, the profound pathos. You will, as you go along, mention, by way of illustration, one incident after another.

D. SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

1. A brief but satisfactory account of the history of Sumeria and Babylonia, as well as a sketch of the geography of the "Fertile Crescent," will be found in "The Conquest of Civilization" by James Henry Breasted (Harper and Brothers, New York, 1926), pp. 111 to 155. (It was Prof. Breasted who invented the term "Fertile Crescent.")

2. A more elaborate account of Babylonian civilization will be found in "The Civilization of Babylonia and Assyria" by Morris Jastrow (Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1915). The religion, law, commerce and art of Babylonia are dealt with on pp. 187 to 367.

3. Read the first and second chapters of "The Genius of Israel" by Carleton Noyes (Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston and

New York, 1924) for a fine attempt to reconstruct the early nomadic life of the Hebrews.

4. A documented and scholarly, but by no means dull account of nomadic life, with special reference to the Hebrews, will be found on pp. 115 to 147 of "A History of Hebrew Civilization" by Alfred Bertholet (Brentano's, New York, undated).

TOPIC TWO

The Bondage of Egypt

A. Summary. B. Questions on (*a*) Text and (*b*) Literature. C. Subjects for Essays. D. Suggestions for Additional Reading.

A. SUMMARY

§ 1. Egypt has been aptly called "the gift of the Nile." Every summer that river overflows its banks. When it recedes to its bed, it has left behind a layer of soil. Thus the long, narrow but exceedingly fertile Nile Valley and the Nile Delta have been formed. The rest of Egypt, on both sides of the valley, is desert waste.

Egypt, "the Gift of the Nile"

§ 2. Egypt was comparatively secure against invasion. Hence civilization in Egypt has continued practically unbroken.

About 3400 B.C.E., the various city kingdoms of Egypt were united by King Menes. He founded the First Egyptian Dynasty. A rich civilization developed, of which the greatest monuments are the pyramids near Cairo in lower Egypt. A system of picture writing known as *hieroglyphics* arose. As early as this age there was already contact between Egypt and Canaan.

The Pyramid Age of Egypt

The Egyptians engaged in intensive farming, raised cattle, excelled in manufactures, and traded by land and water. Their social ladder ran from the Pharaoh or King down to nobles, priests, merchants, artisans, serfs and slaves. Their religion recognized many gods, general and local, as well as sacred animals. Re (pronounced *ray*) was god of the sun. Osiris was god of life and immortality. Isis, goddess of earth and sea, was the wife of Osiris. An important local deity was Amon, god of Thebes. The Egyptians embalmed their dead to preserve the body, as they believed, for future life. Their pyramids were vast tombs.

Economic, Social and Religious Conditions

The Pyramid Age was followed by the Feudal Age (about 2000 B.C.E.), so called because the local barons gained more or less independence. In this age the Egyptians built magnificent temples. The greatest were those of Luxor and Karnak, in Upper Egypt.

The Feudal Age

The literature and other relics of this age reveal contact, both friendly and hostile, between Egypt and Canaan. Especially interesting is the story of the Egyptian Sinuhi, who left an account of his sojourn in Canaan.

About 1700 B.C.E., Egypt was invaded by Semitic nomads known as Hyksos or "Shepherd kings." The Hyksos ruled Egypt more than a hundred years.

About 1580 B.C.E., the Hyksos were expelled. Then began the Age of the New Empire. It was an age of conquest. Among the great conquerors were Thutmose III and Thutmose IV. Syria and Canaan became tributary to Egypt. The decline of the Empire began with Akhenaton, who tried to bring about a religious revolution but failed.

Age of the New Empire

During the decline, the princes of Canaan wrote letters to the Egyptian Pharaohs begging for help against new invaders, the Habiri. These are the famous letters on clay tablets discovered at El-Amarna in Egypt. Some believe that the Habiri were Hebrews.

The El-Amarna Letters

Foreign wars and conquest were resumed by the Pharaohs of the Nineteenth Dynasty. The greatest of them was Rameses II who died in 1225 B.C.E. He was an insatiable builder of temples, monuments and cities. In Goshen near the border he built two store cities, Pithom and Raamses. There his attention was arrested by the Hebrew shepherds, whom a previous Pharaoh had permitted to settle in the country.

Rameses II

§ 3. The Hebrews or children of Israel had, until then, been living in peace and seclusion. They were able to follow their own way of life and preserve their traditions. Now they began to be oppressed. The Pharaoh feared them because they had grown numerous. He ordered male Hebrew infants to be thrown into the Nile. He compelled the Hebrews to labor at his building operations. Such compulsory labor was imposed upon the Egyptians also. But to the Hebrews it was slavery. They hated it bitterly.

The Pharaoh Enslaves the Hebrews

Rameses was followed by his son Merneptah. But the lot of the Hebrews only grew worse. They prayed for deliverance.

§ 4. They found their deliverer in their great leader, Moses. This man is the embodiment of all that is most exalted in the Hebrew character. He is the supreme Jewish hero. After a youth spent in the court of the Pharaoh, he returns to his own people. He slays a brutal Egyptian taskmaster and flees to the desert of Midian. There his task as liberator is laid upon him through the symbol of the burning bush.

Moses

With his brother Aaron, he appears before the Pharaoh demanding, "Let my people go." The Pharaoh refuses. But after a series of frightful plagues which fall on Egypt, the Pharaoh yields. The Hebrews depart. At the Red Sea, the Egyptians again try to halt them. But the Hebrews pass over in safety while the Egyptians are overwhelmed in the waves. Such is the tradition of the Great Exodus.

The Exodus

B. QUESTIONS

a. TEXT

§ 1. *Egypt, the "Gift of the Nile"*

1. Why is the term "fertile ribbon" a good description of the Nile Valley?

2. Explain how the Nile River has actually "made" this valley.

3. Describe the climate of Egypt, and show how it has aided in developing its civilization.

4. Draw a map of Egypt. Trace on it the course of the Nile, locate the Delta, and indicate the following places: Goshen, Pithom and Raamses, the Pyramids, Cairo, El-Amarna, Luxor, Karnak and Thebes.

§ 2. *From the Pyramid Age to Rameses II*

5. Show how Egypt was comparatively secure against invaders.

6. What is the importance of King Menes in the history of Egypt?

7. Why do men marvel at the pyramids? For what purpose were they built by the Egyptians?

8. Compare the cuneiform with the hieroglyphic system of

writing, with respect to (*a*) development from picture to syllable sign (*b*) writing materials used in each.

9. Describe the social system of ancient Egypt.

10. Explain the origin of the word "Pharaoh" as the title of the Egyptian monarch.

11. What led the ancient Egyptians to lavish so much care on their dead?

12. Discuss the religion of the ancient Egyptians, referring to their gods and goddesses, their temples, priests and worship.

13. Who were the "sand dwellers," and what did the Egyptians have to do with them?

14. Compare the Feudal Age in Egypt's history with the Age of the Pyramids, with respect to (*a*) authority exercised by the Pharaohs; (*b*) the principal monuments of each; and (*c*) the principal center of civilization of each.

15. What was the "Book of the Dead"?

16. Who was Sinuhi and why does his story particularly interest us?

17. Who were the Hyksos?

18. What distinguished the Age of the New Empire from the previous Ages?

19. Discuss the El-Amarna letters, telling by whom and to whom they were written, their general contents, and the light they throw on the state of affairs in Canaan in the Fourteenth Century B.C.E.

20. Who was Rameses II, and how did he happen to come into contact with the children of Israel?

§ 3. *The Bondage of Egypt*

21. Describe the life of the children of Israel in Goshen before the oppression.

22. Why did the Pharaoh look upon them as a menace?

23. What two cruel oppressions did he impose upon them?

24. What difference was there between the way the Egyptians regarded forced labor and the way the Hebrews regarded it?

§ 4. *The Exodus*

25. Discuss the place which the Exodus from Egypt occupies in the consciousness of the Jewish people.

26. "The personality of Moses has been an active force in Jewish history throughout the ages." Discuss the meaning of this statement.

27. Recount the early life of Moses, referring to his birth, his upbringing, the incident with the taskmaster, his flight, and the vision of the burning bush.

28. Recount the leading events of the Exodus, touching on Moses' demand on the Pharaoh, the plagues, the journey to the Red Sea, the pursuit and the deliverance.

b. LITERATURE

1. *Birth and Early Manhood of Moses*

1. Why did the mother of the infant Moses have to hide him?

2. State the leading incidents contained in the passage. What traits in the character of Moses do these incidents reveal?

2. *The Burning Bush*

3. Why is the incident of the burning bush "the great spiritual crisis in the life of Moses"?

4. What answer does Moses give when he is ordered to deliver his people? What trait of character does this answer reveal?

3. *The Song of Deliverance*

5. Explain the meaning of the following expressions: "The LORD is my strength and song." "With the blast of Thy nostrils the waters were piled up."

6. Point out a passage in this song that expresses each of the following emotions: joy, triumph, confidence, gratitude, reverence, awe, religious ecstasy.

C. SUBJECTS FOR ESSAYS

1. IN AND OUT OF EGYPT

This is to be a brief narrative of the history of the children of Israel in Egypt. Explain what it was that led them to settle there, recount their early and later experiences there, and tell how they were finally delivered by Moses. Include a brief account of the early life and character of Moses.

2. Egypt and Babylonia

These two represent the principal civilizations with which the Hebrews came into contact. Compare them under the following heads: (*a*) location on river courses; (*b*) dependence on irrigation; (*c*) exposure to enemies; (*d*) agriculture, manufacturing and commerce; (*e*) systems of writing; (*f*) architecture and art; (*g*) religious beliefs.

3. "To My Cousin in Canaan"

Imagine yourself one of the Hebrews who has settled in Goshen. A cousin of yours, for some reason or other, has remained in Canaan. Write him a letter telling him of your impressions of Egypt whose wonders you have seen. Write him of the cities, the pyramids, the temples; the palaces, the pictures, the statues; the farmers, the nobles, the soldiers; the Pharaoh's power and glory, etc. Don't hide behind the adjectives "wonderful," and "beautiful." Show that you have really learned something about those things.

D. SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

1. An excellent brief survey of the history and civilization of ancient Egypt will be found in the "Conquest of Civilization" by James Henry Breasted, pp. 43 to 110 (Harper and Brothers, New York, 1926).

2. A still briefer sketch, useful as a summary, will be found in "The Stream of History" by Geoffrey Parsons, pp. 142 to 165 (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1928).

3. Perhaps the greatest Egyptologist was W. M. Flinders Petrie. In his book, "Egypt and Israel" (The Macmillan Co., New York, 1910) read the chapters "Israel and Egypt," and "The Exodus," pp. 28 to 49.

4. A finely written review of Israel's sojourn in Egypt and the exodus will be found in "The Genius of Israel" by Carleton Noyes (Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston and New York, 1924).

TOPIC THREE

Sinai and the Desert

A. Summary. B. Questions on (*a*) Text and (*b*) Literature. C. Subjects for Essays. D. Suggestions for Additional Reading.

A. SUMMARY

§ 1. Led by Moses, the former slaves proceeded south into the desolate Sinai Peninsula. They were a difficult people to lead, but Moses was a peerless leader. He took the indirect route to Canaan for two reasons. First, he wished to avoid the powerful Philistines who, hailing from Crete, had settled on the southern coast of Canaan. Second, he wished to bring the people to the holy Mount Sinai to renew the covenant of the Patriarchs. Before they arrived at Sinai they fought and defeated the Amalekites at Rephidim.

The Journey to Sinai

§ 2. At Sinai, the Israelites received the Ten Words or Decalogue, commonly known as the Ten Commandments. These form the foundation of Monotheistic religion and ethical or social law.

The first five commandments are primarily religious. The first two declare the supremacy and unity of God, the second also prohibiting "graven images." The third forbids swearing in the name of the Deity. The fourth establishes and consecrates the Sabbath, an institution of immense social value also. The fifth enjoins respect for parents.

The Ten Commandments

The last five commandments are primarily ethical, or social. The sixth prohibits murder. The seventh forbids adultery. The eighth prohibits stealing. The ninth prohibits false testimony. The tenth forbids covetousness.

§ 3. Soon after the proclamation of the Ten Commandments, came the incident of the golden calf. Moses being absent, the people slumped back into the idolatry they had learned in Egypt. They compelled Aaron to make them a golden calf and worshiped it. Moses realized how hard his task with them would be.

The Golden Calf

He proceeded to give them additional laws. Like the Ten Commandments, these laws, or Torah, may be divided into religious laws, or laws "between man and God" and social laws, or laws "between man and his neighbor."

The Torah

The religious laws describe the various offerings and sacrifices, command the construction of a portable temple or Tabernacle, and establish a priesthood. They continually warn against idolatry, the cardinal sin. They enjoin sexual purity, and lay down dietary laws for hygienic living. They command the strict observance of the Sabbath and the festivals.

The Religious Laws

These festivals mark the seasons of the agricultural calendar, and at the same time have historic and religious significance. Passover commemorates the Exodus, and marks the season of the new flock and first fruits. Shabuoth commemorates the promulgation of the Ten Commandments, and marks the ripening of the harvest. Succoth is in memory of the desert wandering and it is also the festival of the vintage and ingathering. Those three are the "pilgrimage festivals." Other holy days established in the Torah are Rosh Hashanah, or New Year, and Yom Kippur or Day of Atonement.

The Festivals

The social laws, or the laws "between man and his neighbor," are both civil and criminal. They provide punishment for crimes and compensation for injuries. They order the establishment of cities of refuge for those guilty of involuntary manslaughter. They enjoin strict and impartial justice. They are keenly and constantly mindful of the rights of the weak: the widow, the orphan and the stranger. A Hebrew slave was not to remain in involuntary servitude for more than six years. A strong sense of social justice pervades all those laws.

The Social Laws

Among the social laws, those relating to the Sabbatical and Jubilee years are of special interest. The Sabbatical Year was to occur every seventh year. The soil was not to be planted and all debts were to be cancelled. The Jubilee Year was to occur every fiftieth year. All Hebrew slaves were to be liberated. All land was to be restored to the original owners.

Sabbatical and Jubilee Years

§ 4. Having received the Torah, the people resumed their

journey through the Sinai Peninsula. The hardships made them complain and grumble. An unsuccessful rebellion was led by Korah of the tribe of Levi.

Hardships and Rebellion

From the oasis of Kadesh-barnea Moses sent twelve spies into Canaan. All, except Caleb and Joshua, brought back terrifying reports of the strength of the inhabitants. The people were dismayed. Moses, thereupon, decided to let the old generation, the former slaves, die in the desert.

The Twelve Spies

The wanderings were resumed. After forty years, the old generation having died, the children of Israel reached the borders of Edom, Moab, and Ammon. They refrained from attacking those three, for they were kindred peoples. But at Jahaz, they attacked and defeated Sihon, the Amorite king of Heshbon. At Edrei, they defeated Og, the king of Bashan. These two battles gave them all of Transjordania as far as Mount Hermon. The magician, Balaam, was hired to curse the invaders, but he could only bless them. The tribes of Reuben, Gad and half of Manasseh decided to settle in the newly conquered regions.

Conquest of Transjordania

Moses, the prophet, lawgiver and leader, was not privileged to cross the Jordan. He saw Canaan from Mount Nebo in Moab and died on the summit. His grave has remained unknown to this day.

Death of Moses

B. QUESTIONS

a. TEXT

§ 1. *The Route to Sinai*

1. Why has the journey of the Hebrews from Egypt to Canaan been called "the most momentous migration in the annals of mankind"?

2. Describe the character of the people whom Moses led.

3. Give two reasons why Moses refrained from taking the direct northerly route into Canaan.

4. What is the meaning and historic background of the phrase "the fleshpots of Egypt"?

5. When Jews wish to describe a particularly bitter and relentless enemy they speak of him as "an Amalek." Why?

§ 2. *The Ten Commandments*

6. Why were the tablets on which the Decalogue or Ten Commandments were inscribed called the "Tables of the Covenant"?

7. Name two of the so-called "religious" commandments.

8. Name four of the so-called "social" or "ethical" commandments.

9. What makes the Sabbath one of the most important institutions in human society?

10. In what way is the Hebrew Sabbath superior to the Babylonian *Shabattum?*

11. Most of the commandments are worded negatively. The Jewish Golden Rule is also worded negatively. Why?

§ 3. *The Torah*

12. What is the meaning of the word *Torah?* The Five Books of Moses are collectively called "Torah." Why?

13. Explain the expressions "laws between man and God" and "laws between man and his neighbor."

14. What was the Tabernacle, and what was the holiest object it contained?

15. Why is idolatry described as "the gravest sin of all"?

16. What were the three "pilgrimage festivals," and why were they so called?

17. The "pilgrimage festivals" represent "a mingling of the memory of an historic event with a definite season of the agricultural year." Illustrate this statement with reference to each of those festivals.

18. What holy days occur in the month of Tishri?

19. What does the expression "social justice" mean? Give three laws of the Mosaic code that aim to safeguard social justice.

20. What were the provisions of the Mosaic code with respect to Hebrew slaves?

21. In various professions and occupations, especially in teaching, the custom of taking a "sabbatical" leave of absence for a year is gaining in vogue. What is the historic origin of this Sabbatical year?

22. The American "Liberty Bell," preserved in Independence Hall, Philadelphia, has the following inscription: "Proclaim

liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof." What is the origin of this inscription?

23. Various social and economic evils have arisen from the existence of "a small class of landed proprietors and a large class of landless serfs." Explain how the Jubilee Year aimed to prevent such a state of affairs.

§ 4. *From Sinai to the Jordan*

24. Give two incidents of the journey through the desert that illustrate the difficulties with which Moses had to contend.

25. What important decision was Moses led to make as a result of the report of the twelve spies?

26. The expression "Generation of the Wilderness" is used to describe a people not fit to achieve some great goal, but doomed to die on the way to it. What is the origin of this expression?

27. What were the results of the battle of Jahaz? Of the battle of Edrei?

28. What tribes found permanent homes in Transjordania?

29. Describe the death of Moses.

b. LITERATURE

1. *The Revelation at Mount Sinai*

1. Explain the expression "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation."

2. By what means are the people impressed with the vast importance of the Ten Commandments?

2. *The Sin of the Golden Calf*

3. Sometimes a man is spoken of as worshiping the golden calf. What does that mean?

4. Explain the phrase "a stiff-necked people."

3. *Story of the Twelve Spies*

5. In Hebrew the twelve spies are called *m'raglim* (singular: *m'ragel*). Now, a *m'ragel* has come to mean one who brings bad tidings in order to dishearten. How did the word come to have that connotation?

4. *Story of Balaam the Magician*

6. Why does Balaam bless when he has been hired to curse?

7. Describe the preparations that are made before Balaam is able to prophesy.

8. Describe his physical condition when he prophesies.

5. *The Farewell of Moses*

9. Describe the general style of the Book of Deuteronomy.

10. "Man doth not live by bread only." What does this expression mean? What is its origin?

11. What is the origin and meaning of the expression "flowing with milk and honey"?

12. Reread the last paragraph of this selection (p. 176). What two Jewish customs have their origin in this paragraph?

6. *The Death of Moses*

13. A leader in a great enterprise, who dies before reaching the goal, is often compared to Moses. Why?

C. SUBJECTS FOR ESSAYS

1. Moses the Leader

Analyze the task that Moses had to accomplish, pointing out the difficulties he faced that arose from the character of the people he led, as well as those that sprang from the nature of the enterprise itself, such as the hardships of the journey, the enemies to be overcome, etc. Bring out the qualities in the character of Moses which enabled him to conquer those difficulties. Include a brief account of his tragic end.

2. Social Justice in the Laws of Moses

Social justice has for its aim the protection of the poor and weak against oppression by the rich and the strong. Bring together as many laws of the Mosaic code, that seem to you to have this aim, as you can. Explain how the Jubilee Year would advance the cause of social justice.

3. The "Pilgrimage" Festivals

Explain the historic significance of each of the three "pilgrimage" festivals, and show, also, what special meaning each one had

in the life of the farmer and shepherd. Give the reason why they were called "pilgrimage festivals."

D. SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

1. For an illuminating and stimulating appraisal of the place of Moses in Jewish thought and history, read the essay "Moses" in "Selected Essays by Achad Ha'am" (Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1912).

2. For an account of the events from the crossing of the Red Sea through the death of Moses, read the "History of the Jews" by Heinrich Graetz, V. I. pp. 18 to 31 (Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1891).

3. For a vivid account of the journey through the wilderness and the epic rôle of Moses, read "The Genius of Israel" by Carleton Noyes, pp. 47 to 71 (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston and New York, 1924).

4. For a scholarly, yet interesting, discussion of the contrast between the Hebrew Sabbath and the Babylonian Shabattum, read Chapter II of "Hebrew and Babylonian Traditions" by Morris Jastrow (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1914).

TOPIC FOUR

Canaan and Its Conquest

A. Summary. B. Questions on (*a*) Text and (*b*) Literature. C. Subjects for Essays. D. Suggestions for Additional Reading.

A. SUMMARY

§ 1. Joshua, son of Nun, had been named by Moses as his successor. Joshua was an old and seasoned warrior. After crossing the Jordan he began the conquest by capturing Jericho, the gateway to the land. He then ascended into the mountains. By a clever ruse he captured the fortress of Ai.

Capture of Jericho and Ai

§ 2. Geographically, Palestine is a land of striking contrasts. It has four distinct strips or zones running north and south. The first is the Transjordanian plateau east of the Jordan. The second is the Jordan valley. The river flows, for the most part, below sea level. The main bodies of water associated with it are Lake Merom, the Sea of Galilee, and the Dead Sea. The latter is 1,300 feet below sea level. The third zone is the central range. The fourth is the coastal plain.

The Four Zones of Palestine

The Carmel ridge breaks upon this plain while the central range is broken by the famous Valley of Jezreel. Here were fought many famous and decisive battles.

Valley of Jezreel

Palestine, especially its northern and central portions, is a fertile land. The climate varies from tropical to subtropical. It has but two seasons: a dry summer and rainy winter. It produces corn, wine and oil. Among its fruit trees are the olive, the fig and the date. The southern hills offered good pasture ground. To the children of Israel it was a land "flowing with milk and honey."

Climate and Products

Canaan was the bridge that united Egypt and Babylon. Caravan roads wound through it. It was a center of trade and the meeting ground of different civilizations.

Canaan a Bridge

§ 3. All the nations of Canaan except the Philistines belonged to the Semitic race. East of the Jordan dwelt the Edomites, Moabites and Ammonites. The Hebrews regarded these three as being kindred to them. West of the Jordan, the Amorites were dominant in the southern half of the country. The Amorites had also penetrated into Transjordania as conquerors. In the northern half, the dominant nation was the Canaanites.

The Nations of Canaan

The chief occupations of the people of Canaan were farming and stock raising. They also manufactured various articles for use and ornament. Commerce, especially the carrying trade, flourished among them. In the cities there was considerable wealth and luxury.

Their Occupations

These cities were fortresses surrounded with high and thick walls. Each city was a more or less independent political unit. Its ruler called himself king.

Their Cities

Owing to its position, Canaan was exposed to the influence of both Egypt and Babylonia. The influence of the latter predominated until about 1500 B.C.E. Subsequently, Canaan became one of the provinces of imperial Egypt. But in Joshua's day, Egyptian suzerainty was merely nominal. The king of each city did as he pleased.

Influence of Egypt and Babylonia

The religion of the different nations of Canaan was practically the same. Like the rest of their civilization, their gods and goddesses were borrowed from other nations. The most prevalent worship was that of Baal and his female consort Baala or Ashera. There were a great many Baals, each locality having its own. The Canaanites worshiped their gods with strange and coarse rites. Human sacrifice was part of this worship. They had their shrines on the tops of hills, called "high places." There, their priests and priestesses conducted their savage and immoral worship.

Canaanite Religion and Worship

The religion Moses taught the Hebrews, on the other hand, demanded justice and purity. The struggle between the Hebrews and the Canaanites was bound, therefore, to be a conflict between two ways of life.

Hebrew *Versus* Canaanite

§ 4. The Hebrews, led by Joshua, went forward with the con-

quest of Canaan. The Gibeonites had, by means of a ruse, tricked them into an alliance. Now Joshua and the Gibeonites find themselves opposed by a coalition of five southern kings. Joshua routs them at the battle of Gibeon and captures their cities. At the battle of Merom he defeats a coalition of the kings of the north, headed by Jabin, King of Hazor.

Battles of Gibeon and Merom

The wars lasted many years and the conquest was not complete. Many of the fortified places continued to be held by the natives. The Philistines remained in possession of the southern part of the costal plain. The Phoenicians continued to occupy the northern part.

Conquest Incomplete

Before he died, Joshua divided the conquered land among the tribes who had not yet been settled. In the south, the lion's share fell to Judah; in the north, to Ephraim. Between north and south rose the fortress of Jebus, or Jerusalem, still held by the native Jebusites. The Levites, or priests, were scattered among the other tribes. The division took place at Shiloh, which came to be regarded as the religious center of the tribes. Finally, Joshua designated six cities as cities of refuge where a person who had killed some one by accident might be safe from the blood avenger.

The Division

B. QUESTIONS

a. TEXT

§ 1. *Capture of Jericho and Ai*

1. In what connection had Joshua already figured in our story?

2. What gave the children of Israel confidence in face of the task of conquering Canaan?

3. Why was Jericho strategically so important? Describe its capture.

4. Describe the stratagem by which Joshua finally captured Ai.

§ 2. *The Land of Canaan*

5. What is remarkable about the geography of Palestine?

6. Name the four north and south zones into which Palestine is divided.

7. Describe the Jordan valley, explaining the origin of the word Jordan, and naming the bodies of water into which the river flows.

8. Describe the Dead Sea, giving its location with respect to sea level, and pointing out others of its striking features.

9. What "break" occurs in the coastal plain? In the central range?

10. Describe the Valley of Jezreel and explain its historic importance.

11. Describe the climate and products of Canaan.

12. "Canaan was the bridge between Egypt and Babylonia." Point out the economic, cultural and political importance of this geographic fact.

13. Draw a map of Palestine locating on it the four north and south zones, the Jordan River, Lake Merom, Sea of Galilee, Dead Sea, Mount Carmel, and the Valley of Jezreel.

§ 3. *The Nations of Canaan*

14. Who were the original nations of Transjordania? Why did the Hebrews consider them kindred peoples?

15. Who were the Amorites? Point out the regions they inhabited on both sides of the Jordan.

16. Point out the regions inhabited by the Canaanites.

17. Who were the Philistines and what part of the land did they inhabit?

18. Draw a map of Canaan and locate on it the different nations who inhabited it.

19. Discuss the economic life of Canaan referring to its agriculture, manufactures and trade.

20. Describe the appearance of a Canaanite city, outside as well as inside.

21. What were the relations between Canaan and Babylonia? between Canaan and Egypt?

22. Describe the political conditions of Canaan at the time of the Hebrew invasion, referring to the political status of the cities and the suzerainty of Egypt.

23. Name some of the gods other than Baal that were worshiped in Canaan.

24. What does *baal* mean? What powers did the Canaanites ascribe to the god Baal?

25. Describe the Baal worship, referring to the "high places," human sacrifice, and other rites.

26. "The conflict between the Israelites and Canaanites was bound to be a bitter and ceaseless struggle between two ways of life." Explain this statement.

§ 4. *The Conquest and Division of Canaan*

27. Tell how the Gibeonites tricked the Israelites into making a treaty with them.

28. Whom did Joshua overcome at the battle of Gibeon and what were the results of that battle?

29. What were the results of the battle of Merom?

30. Was the conquest complete? Point out some of the places that remained unconquered.

31. Draw a map of Canaan and indicate the region alloted to each of the tribes by Moses and Joshua.

32. What was the status of the tribe of Levi and how was that tribe provided for?

33. Why were cities of refuge necessary? Name the cities of refuge designated by Joshua.

b. LITERATURE

1. *The Appointment of Joshua*

1. Explain the meaning of the expressions: "Toward the going down of the sun" and "toward the sun rising."

2. Show how this selection reveals Joshua as a man of action.

2. *The Story of the Two Spies*

3. Explain how the two spies eluded the pursuit of the king of Jericho.

4. What does this story reveal with respect to the fortifications of Jericho?

5. Recount the plan by which Rahab and her kindred were to be saved.

3. *The Story of the Wily Gibeonites*

6. Point out the circumstantial details which make the description of the stratagem of the Gibeonites so vivid.

7. Explain the meaning of the expressions: "Make ye a covenant with us." "Hewers of wood and drawers of water." "We are in thy hand."

4. *The Defeat of the Amorites*

8. Explain the meaning of the expressions: "They encamped against Gibeon." "Slack not thy hands from thy servants."

9. What was the book of Jashar?

5. *Renewal of the Covenant by Joshua*

10. Explain the meaning of the following expressions: "Well stricken in years." "Cleave unto your God." "They shall be a snare and a trap unto you." "To go the way of all the earth."

11. Explain the meaning of the following expressions: "His anger shall be kindled against you." "He multiplied your seed." "Incline your heart unto the LORD."

12. Why does Joshua recall the past in exhorting his people?

13. What was the covenant which Joshua renewed before he died?

C. SUBJECTS FOR ESSAYS

1. FROM DAN TO BEER-SHEBA

This should be an essay on the geography of Palestine. Describe the four zones and the two so-called "breaks": the Carmel range and the Valley of Jezreel. Discuss the climate, the natural resources and the products of the land. Describe its bodies of water.

2. THE NATIONS OF CANAAN

Name and locate the nations who inhabited Canaan on both sides of the Jordan. Then discuss their civilization: their occupations, their cities, their system of writing, their political organization, their religion. Point out the essential respects in which the invading Hebrews differed from them.

3. With Joshua in Canaan

Imagine yourself one of Joshua's warriors. You have fought with him from the crossing of the Jordan to the division of the conquered land, and you have kept a diary of the principal events. Reproduce this diary. Let it be vivid and exciting. Have in it entries for at least the following events: the report of the two spies whom Joshua had sent to Jericho ("To-day the two spies whom Joshua had sent to Jericho came back. What a sight they were!" etc.); the crossing of the Jordan; the capture of Jericho and Ai; the battle of Gibeon; the battle of Merom; the division. Your diary must, of course, give evidence that you know the history of those events.

D. SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

1. Read the story of the Conquest of Canaan in Volume I of the "History of the Jews" by Heinrich Graetz, pp. 32 to 52 (Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1891). This is a translation from the German. The translation is a poor one, nevertheless the reading will help to fill out the picture.

2. The classic work on the geography of Canaan is "The Historical Geography of the Holy Land" by George Adam Smith (published in 1895). If nothing more, read the chapter: "The Form of the Land and Its Historical Consequences," pp. 43 to 60.

3. For a gorgeously painted canvas of the teeming life of Canaan in the centuries before the irruption of the Hebrews, read pp. 72 to 105 of "The Genius of Israel" by Carleton Noyes (Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston and New York, 1924).

4. In "A History of Hebrew Civilization" by Alfred Bertholet (Brentano's, New York, undated), there are two chapters bearing on Topic Four. The geography is dealt with from pp. 11 to 30, the civilization of the Canaanites from pp. 31 to 114. This is a scholarly work, but it is good reading.

TOPIC FIVE

The Critical Century

A. Summary. B. Questions on (*a*) Text and (*b*) Literature. C. Subjects for Essays. D. Suggestions for Additional Reading.

A. SUMMARY

§ 1. The death of Joshua was followed by a critical period, marked by confusion and disunion. The Israelite tribes were menaced in two ways. First, they were frequently attacked by their enemy neighbors. Second, they adopted their idol worship and other ways of life, and thus were threatened with total assimilation.

Two Dangers

Leaders arose from time to time to meet the first danger. They fought against the enemy and delivered their people from oppression. Then they were recognized as rulers, or *judges,* by one or more tribes. The period following the death of Joshua is, therefore, known as the period of the Judges.

The Judges

Without central authority or unity among the tribes, each tribe developed a distinct individuality. Asher, Naphtali, Issachar and Zebulun, dwelling near the sea with the Phoenicians for neighbors, became wealthy sea merchants. Manasseh and Ephraim, especially the latter, claimed supremacy in the north. Ephraim was proud and quarrelsome.

The Northern Tribes

In the south, the leading tribe was Judah, Simeon gradually mingling with it. The southerners continued the pastoral way of life. They lived apart, and had little to do with the other tribes in the period of the Judges. Part of Dan, pressed by the Philistines, settled in the extreme north. Benjamin developed a high martial spirit. Across the Jordan, Reuben and Gad were often the victims of their enemy neighbors.

The Southern Tribes

Union among the tribes was rare and short-lived. Once, all the tribes united to punish Benjamin for a serious crime committed by some members of that tribe. There was civil war, and Benjamin was almost annihilated.

Civil War

Idol worship was rampant. The danger of total assimilation was extreme. Yet, there existed certain religious centers for the worship of the God of Israel. The most important of them was Shiloh. There, the Ark was kept which contained the Tablets of the Law.

Shiloh

§ 2. The first great hero-judge was Ehud the Benjaminite. He slew the king of Moab who was oppressing his people. Then he led the Israelites against the Moabites and defeated them.

Ehud

One of the greatest of the judges was Deborah. Inspired by her, Barak mobilized the warriors of Israel and defeated the Canaanites of the north in the Valley of Jezreel. Sisera, the Canaanite general, was slain by the woman Jael. The victory is commemorated in the remarkable Song of Deborah.

Deborah

The next great judge was Gideon of the tribe of Manasseh. He routed the Midianites and Amalekites who raided and terrorized the Israelites. Many thousands had flocked to his standard. But he won his victory by stratagem with only three hundred picked men. He completed the rout of the Midianites by pursuing them across the Jordan. The haughty Ephraimites, claimed to have been slighted and threatened violence. Gideon appeased them by flattery.

Gideon

Gideon was offered the crown but refused it. One of his sons, Abimelech, accepted it. He ruled over Shechem and the neighboring region. His reign was bloody and ended in disaster for himself and his people. He began by slaying all his brothers. Later, the people rebelled, and, after a bloody civil war, Abimelech was killed.

Abimelech's Short-lived Kingship

In Transjordania, Reuben and Gad were the victims of oppression at the hands of the Ammonites. They were delivered by Jephthah the Gileadite. Before setting out to battle, Jephthah vowed that he would sacrifice whatever came out of his door to meet him after his victory. There came out to meet him his only daughter. She urged him to keep his vow.

Jephthah

Again the Ephraimites came forward with threats and taunts. Jephthah fell upon them and defeated them with great slaughter. He died after judging his people for six years.

§ 3. The most formidable of all the enemies of Israel were the Philistines. They were a strong and united people whom the Israelites were unable to conquer. The name, Palestine, is derived from them. In the period of the Judges, the neighboring Israelite tribes were subjected to them.

The Philistines

The great hero who avenged his people against the Philistines was Samson son of Manoah of the tribe of Dan. He is represented as endowed with super-human physical strength. His mother brings him up as a Nazirite. His hair is therefore uncut, and this long hair is the symbol of his strength. Morally, however, he is a weakling. His greatest weakness is his fondness for Philistine women.

Samson

Samson performs many remarkable feats of strength and daring. Among other exploits he slays a lion, kills a thousand Philistines with the jawbone of an ass, and escapes from Gaza by carrying off the gate of the city. But in the end he is betrayed by Delilah, his Philistine wife. She wheedles out of him the secret of his strength. His hair is cut off and his strength is gone. He is bound, blinded and thrown into prison.

His Exploits and Betrayal

The Philistines gather in their temple to celebrate. They send for Samson to gloat over his helplessness. Samson takes his stand between two pillars supporting the roof of the temple. He bends on them, and overthrows them with the cry: "Let me die with the Philistines!" The temple falls and buries the Philistines, as well as the hero.

His Death

But the Philistines are as strong as ever. They press on northward and defeat the Israelites at Aphek. The Israelites send to Shiloh for the Ark of the Covenant. Again they attack the Philistines, bearing the Ark into battle. But they suffer a second defeat and the Ark is captured. On hearing the news, Eli, the old high priest of Shiloh, falls dead.

The Philistines Defeat the Israelites

The Philistines press on. They capture and destroy Shiloh. They place their garrisons in the cities of Israel. They become the masters of the country.

They Become the Masters

B. QUESTIONS

a. TEXT

§ 1. *The Period of the Judges*

1. Why was the period after Joshua's death a critical one?

2. Describe the physical danger to which the tribes were exposed.

3. Describe the moral danger to which the tribes were exposed.

4. What does assimilation mean? What happens to a people when it is totally assimilated?

5. Who were the judges? Why were they so called?

6. In the period of the Judges, says the chronicler, "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes." What does this statement convey with regard to the political situation of the period?

7. Name the tribes of the north. Which of them looked upon itself as the leader and why?

8. Name the tribes of the south. In the period of the Judges, what was the relation between Judah and the other tribes?

9. Name the tribes across the Jordan. Why were they in greater danger than the others?

10. Give an instance of civil war among the tribes of Israel.

11. Give an instance of the prevalence of idolatry among them.

12. What importance did Shiloh have during this period?

§ 2. *Ehud, Deborah, Gideon and Jephthah*

13. Tell the story of Ehud's exploit and of his victory against the Moabites.

14. Identify the following: Deborah, Barak, Jabin, Sisera, Jael.

15. What were some of the oppressions that Israel suffered as revealed in the Song of Deborah?

16. How did the different tribes respond to Deborah's summons?

17. Who were the "children of the east"? Describe the sufferings they inflicted on the Israelites.

18. What prompted Gideon to proceed against the Midianites?

19. How did Gideon pick his famous three hundred?

20. Describe the stratagem by which he routed the enemy.

21. Recount the incident between Gideon and the Ephraimites.

22. What incident reveals the unstable religious beliefs of the Israelites of that period?

23. Give a brief account of the bloody reign of Abimelech.

24. What induced Jephthah to take command of the Israelites against the Ammonites?

25. Give an account of his preliminary negotiations with the enemy.

26. What was it that wiped out Jephthah's joy in his victory?

27. What demand did the Ephraimites make on Jephthah and what were the consequences?

§ 3. *Samson and the Philistines*

28. What made the Philistines the most formidable of all the enemies of Israel?

29. What facts indicate the importance of the rôle which the Philistines played in the history of Israel?

30. Point out the conflicting traits in the character of the hero Samson.

31. What special weakness of his proves his undoing?

32. Tell the story of his betrayal at the hands of Delilah.

33. Tell the story of Samson's final exploit and death.

34. Give an account of the two battles at Aphek.

35. What were the consequences of the Philistine victory?

36. What final fate threatened to overtake the children of Israel?

b. LITERATURE

1. *Deborah's Song of Triumph*

1. Pick out a passage in this song that expresses each of the following emotions: scorn, hatred, irony, martial zeal, triumph, gratitude, jubilation, religious awe.

2. Explain the meaning of the following expressions: "To sit among the sheep folds." "There was great searching of heart." "The stars in their courses fought against him." "Why tarry the wheels of his chariot?"

3. Pick out a passage in this song that sheds light on each of the following: the political conditions of the times; the sense of unity among the tribes; the military strength of Israel; the religious conditions of the times; the oppressions to which Israel was subjected.

2. *The Stratagem and Victory of Gideon*

4. Explain the meaning of the following expressions: "Lest they vaunt themselves against me." "Proclaim in the ears of the people." "I will deliver them into thy hand." "Why hast thou served us thus?"

5. Explain the two steps by which Gideon sifted his forces until he had left the "bravest of the brave."

6. Recount the stratagem by which Gideon threw the "children of the east" into confusion.

7. Explain how Gideon placated the angry Ephraimites.

3. *Jotham's Fable*

8. Explain the meaning of the following expressions: "He lifted up his voice." "Rejoice in him." "Do unto him according to the deserving of his hands."

9. Retell the fable of the trees who chose themselves a king.

10. Explain how this fable applied to Abimelech son of Gideon.

4. *The Betrayal and Death of Samson*

11. What is an epic? Why is the story of Samson an epic?

12. Describe the character of Samson as revealed in this story.

13. Describe the character of Delilah.

14. Recount the final exploit and death of Samson.

5. *The Story of Ruth*

15. What is an idyl? Why is the story of Ruth an idyl?

16. Which do you regard as the most moving incident in the story and why?

17. Describe the character of Ruth.

18. Describe the character of Boaz.

19. Explain the claim that Ruth had on Boaz, based on an extension of the law and custom of the Levirate marriage (see note 52, p. 269 and note 63, p. 272).

20. Explain the meaning of the following expressions: "The LORD do so to me, and more also." "A mighty man of valor." "I shall find favor in his sight." "Her hap was to come into the field of Boaz." "Abide here fast by my maidens." "That his name be not cut off from among his brethren."

C. SUBJECTS FOR ESSAYS

1. ISRAEL'S ENEMIES AND DELIVERERS

This should be a brief narrative of the principal oppressors of Israel in the period under consideration and of the leading judges who acted as deliverers. The account should include Ehud, Deborah, Gideon and Jephthah.

2. THE TRAGEDY OF SAMSON

Recount the later events of the Samson epic with special reference to the characters of the two principal personages, Samson and Delilah.

3. ONE OF THE THREE HUNDRED

Imagine yourself one of Gideon's warriors and one of the three hundred who were finally chosen. Tell, in the first person, the story of how Gideon selected his men and how he routed and pursued the "children of the east." Make the story as vivid and exciting as you can.

D. SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

1. A graphic picture of the period of the Judges is given by Carleton Noyes in "The Genius of Israel" (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston and New York, 1924) in the chapter entitled "There Was No King in Israel," pp. 118 to 136.

2. "Samson Agonistes" by John Milton is a tragedy in the Greek manner dealing with the final deed and death of Samson. It should be read for its sublime poetry, its devout spirit and its penetration into the characters who figure in the Samson epic.

TOPIC SIX

Samuel, King Saul and David

A. Summary. B. Questions on (*a*) Text and (*b*) Literature. C. Subjects for Essays. D. Suggestions for Additional Reading.

A. SUMMARY

§ 1. A new leader arose: Samuel, son of Elkanah. He stands out as a prophet and as the greatest of the judges. He was brought up as a priest under Eli at Shiloh. When the Philistines destroyed the sanctuary, Samuel returned to his native village of Ramah.

Samuel

Israel was broken in body as well as in spirit. The nomadic instinct, still strong, was opposed to a central control. There was tribal, but no national patriotism. The tribes were jealous of each other. Such were the dividing forces.

Dividing Forces

There existed also certain unifying forces. There was the sense of common descent. There was the memory of a common past. Common enemies, also, had a unifying effect. But the most important unifying force was the common religion.

Uniting Forces

Samuel labored hard to strengthen the common religion. He called assemblies of the elders who met at Mizpah and elsewhere for worship and public action. Judah began to take an interest in the affairs of the nation. He was assisted by the *nebiim,* or prophets. These were wandering bands of, for the most part, young men. They sang and danced, thus rousing the religious emotions of the people. They represent the beginning of the line of the sublime Hebrew prophets who came later.

The *Nebiim*

The Israelites checked the Philistines at Eben-ezer. But the enemy was not subdued. Soon, he began to advance again. And Samuel was getting old and feeble. His two sons were unworthy to succeed him. So the elders came to Samuel and demanded a king. Samuel warned them that a king meant a master and oppressor.

The Elders Demand a King

But the elders insisted. So Samuel set out to find a king for Israel.

§ 2. The man whom Samuel chose was Saul, son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin. Samuel anointed him and, later, the elders met and elected him. Thus the precedent was established that the king must be elected. Saul was tall, handsome and brave. But he was a mere plowboy and shepherd. Some of the people, at first, would not recognize him.

Saul Elected King

Soon afterwards Saul proved his mettle. The Ammonites were besieging the Israelite city of Jabesh in Gilead. They proposed a shameful condition of surrender. The men of Jabesh appealed for help. Saul issued a summons, and the warriors of Israel responded. He crossed the Jordan and routed the Ammonites.

His First Victory

But the real masters of the land were still the Philistines. The revolt against them was started by Jonathan, Saul's son. He wiped out the Philistine garrison at Gibeah. The enemy concentrated at Michmash. Jonathan and his armor-bearer raided their camp and threw them into panic. The Israelite warriors fell on them and routed them. It was a great victory, and Jonathan was the hero of the day.

The Philistines Are Defeated

But a coldness had crept in between Samuel and Saul. Before the battle, the King had offered up a sacrifice without the priest. Samuel was deeply offended. It was the beginning of the inevitable struggle between the secular and religious authorities.

Priest *Versus* King

§ 3. His victories brought Saul the allegiance of all his people. He set up a capital, a government and standing army. His chief general was his cousin Abner. But the breach between Saul and Samuel became wider.

Saul in Full Power

At Samuel's command, Saul warred against the Amalekites. It was to be a war of extermination. But Saul disobeyed in permitting his men to take booty. At a large gathering in Gilgal, the priest publicly and solemnly renounced the King.

Samuel Rejects Saul

Saul became gloomy and morbid. He plunged into one campaign after another, but could find no consolation. His efforts to please the prophet were of no avail. His melancholy bordered on madness. To soothe him, a young

Enter David

musician from Judah was brought in to play for him. The harpist's name was David son of Jesse.

The Tribe of Judah

§ 4. The tribe of Judah is now to assume the leading rôle in the nation's story. The Judeans, unlike the tribes of the north, had not become assimilated. The ancient faith, habits and occupations continued among them. They were a simple and hardy people.

David the Hero

Saul was charmed by the young musician David. His playing drove away the King's melancholy. But David could fight as well as play. Again the armies of Israel and of the Philistines stand face to face. The Philistine giant Goliath challenges the Israelites to single combat. David alone accepts the challenge. He slays the giant with a stone from his sling. He becomes the hero and darling of the nation. A deep and abiding friendship springs up between David and Jonathan.

David Flees from the Jealous King

Soon, Saul becomes jealous of David. He suspects that David is the man in whose favor Samuel had rejected him. His love is turned to hatred. He becomes bent on slaying the young hero. David eludes his spear and escapes his assassins. In the end, however, he is forced to flee.

David a Fugitive

For the next seven years David is a fugitive. At the sanctuary of Nob, he obtains from the priest the sword of Goliath. Then he flees to the cave of Adullam, where he becomes chieftain of a band of outlaws. Saul pursues him relentlessly. David has to flee from one refuge after another. Twice Saul is in David's power, but David magnanimously spares his life.

He Finds Refuge at Ziklag

Finally, David is compelled to take refuge with the king of Gath. The Philistine king thinks he has turned traitor. But from his headquarters at Ziklag, David makes raids against his people's enemies. His situation is extremely dangerous. But his courage, his wits and his good fortune never desert him.

New Philistine Invasion

§ 5. The Philistines march up the coast and into the Valley of Jezreel for a decisive battle. Saul concentrates at Mount Gilboa to oppose them.

David's Good Fortune

David is required by the king of Gath to march with the Philistine forces. But the other Philistine chiefs object to his presence, and he returns to Ziklag. From there he pursues and punishes the Amalekites who had raided his stronghold in his absence.

Saul, Defeated, Slays Himself

Philistines and Israelites join battle at Mount Gilboa. Saul fights valiantly, but with the fore-knowledge of doom. The Israelites are overwhelmed. Saul is wounded. As the enemy presses closer about him, he slays himself by falling on his sword.

B. QUESTIONS

a. TEXT

§ 1. *Samuel*

1. Give an account of Samuel's youth and upbringing.

2. What influences worked against the union of the tribes?

3. What influences favored such a union?

4. How did Samuel seek to strengthen the religious bond among the Israelites?

5. Explain how the bands of *nebiim* assisted him in this undertaking.

6. What was the value of the assemblies of elders that Samuel convoked?

7. Explain the circumstances that led the elders to demand a king.

8. Give the reasons why Samuel opposed this demand.

9. Why did Samuel finally yield?

§ 2. *First Victories of King Saul*

10. Give an account of the anointing and election of Saul.

11. "In Israel the kingship itself was a democratic institution." What evidence can you bring in support of this statement?

12. Describe Saul's position immediately after his election.

13. Tell the story of his victory over the Ammonites.

14. Recount the incident that started the revolt against the Philistines.

15. Describe Saul's situation before the battle of Michmash.

16. Recount Jonathan's exploit at Michmash.

17. Describe the rout and pursuit of the Philistines.

18. Account for the strain that appeared in the relations between Saul and Samuel.

§ 3. *Saul and Samuel*

19. Describe the royal establishment set up by Saul.

20. How did Saul disobey Samuel during the war against Amalek?

21. Show that the assembly at Gilgal, after the Amalekite war, marks a turning point in the life of Saul.

22. Describe the effect of Samuel's rejection on the spirit of Saul.

23. How did Saul endeavor to solace himself?

24. How did David come to be brought before Saul?

§ 4. *Saul and David*

25. What enabled the tribe of Judah to retain its ancient customs and strength longer than the others?

26. Describe the relations that first existed between Saul and David.

27. Retell the story of David's combat with the giant Goliath.

28. Explain how Saul's affection for David became transformed into suspicion and hatred.

29. Recount the first attempts of Saul on the life of David.

30. Identify the following names of places: Nob, Adullam, Keilah, En-gedi, Ziklag.

31. Identify the following names of persons: Abiathar, Joab, Abishai, Abigail, Achish.

32. Recount the two occasions when Saul was at David's mercy.

33. State the reasons that compelled David to seek refuge with the Philistines.

34. Point out the dangers of David's situation in Ziklag.

§ 5. *Death of Saul*

35. Trace the course of the new Philistine invasion of the north.

36. What stroke of good fortune saved David from having to fight against his own people?

37. What task awaited David on his return to Ziklag?

38. How did David seek to obtain the good will of the elders of Judah?

39. Mention an incident in David's career as a fugitive that illustrates each of the following qualities: (*a*) his courage; (*b*) his shrewdness; (*c*) his resourcefulness.

40. Describe Saul's spiritual state on the eve of the battle of Gilboa.

41. Recount the course of the battle of Gilboa.

42. Describe the death of Saul.

b. LITERATURE

1. *The Birth of Samuel*

1. What do you gather from this story with regard to (*a*) the position of Shiloh in the religious life of Israel; (*b*) the mode of worship at Shiloh.

2. Explain the meaning of the following expressions: "There shall no razor come upon his head." "I poured out my soul before the LORD." "Out of the abundance of my vexation have I spoken." "May the LORD establish his word."

2. *Capture of the Ark and Death of Eli*

3. Why did the Israelites send to Shiloh for the Ark?

4. Which part of the messenger's report deals the death stroke to the aged Eli?

5. Why was Eli's infant grandson given the name of "Ichabod?"

3. *The Anointment of Saul*

6. Often, the following is said of a man (figuratively, of course): "He went seeking his father's asses and found a kingdom." What does the saying mean and what is its origin?

7. What belief did the people entertain with regard to the powers of the "seer"?

8. Explain the meaning of the following expressions: "The

bread is spent in our vessels." "On whom is all the desire of Israel?" "They went out abroad."

4. *Story of David and Goliath*

9. Describe and illustrate the relations between Eliab, the "big brother" and David, the "little brother."

10. Why does David take off the armor which the King had given him for the duel? How does this act heighten the suspense of the narrative?

11. What incident represents the climax of this story?

12. Explain the meaning of the following expressions: "They set the battle in array." "They were sore afraid." "Let no man's heart fail within him." "The battle is the LORD's." "They spoiled the camp."

5. *David and Jonathan*

13. Explain the meaning of the following expressions: "The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David." "It was good in the sight of all the people." "David returned from the slaughter of the Philistines." "Saul eyed David from that day forward."

14. Explain the meaning of the following expressions: "Deal kindly with thy servant." "Thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house forever." "The LORD is between me and thee." "Thou son of perverse rebellion!"

15. Explain the "covenant" between David and Jonathan.

16. Show what changes Saul's feelings toward David undergo, as recorded in this story.

17. Recount the ruse by which Michal saves the life of David.

18. What do you gather from this story as to the manner in which the feast of the new moon was celebrated?

19. What is the cause of Saul's violent rage against his son Jonathan?

6. *The Fugitive Spares His Pursuer*

20. Why does David refrain from slaying his bitter enemy Saul?

21. Why does not David return to Saul as the King invites him to do?

22. Is David's speech to Abner in sarcastic vein? State your reasons for your opinion.

23. Explain the meaning of the following expressions: "I will not smite him a second time." "The LORD will render every man his righteousness and his faithfulness." "Thy life was much set by in mine eyes." "Thou shalt do mightily, and shalt surely prevail."

7. Saul's Last Battle

24. Why is the armor-bearer afraid to slay Saul?

25. Why does Saul put an end to his own life?

C. SUBJECTS FOR ESSAYS

1. THE ELDERS OF ISRAEL IN CONVENTION ASSEMBLED

From every tribe the elders have assembled in Mizpah to deliberate on the affairs of the nation. You are to write a report of their deliberations. The president of the convention is Samuel. What is he likely to say in his opening address? One elder after another rises and reports on the troubles the tribes are having from their enemies: Moabites, Ammonites, Midianites and, above all, Philistines. Finally, one of them rises and, in a passionate speech, demands a king. The convention is "stampeded." Samuel adjourns the session with the announcement that on the morrow he will give them his answer.

2. THE RISE AND FALL OF SAUL

Trace the career of Saul from his anointment by Samuel to his death. Show how "his inner disruption combined with outer forces to bring about the inevitable end." The first part of your essay will present the picture of a man strong and radiant with power and triumph. The second part will show him spiritually broken down, tragic and suffering. Of course, Samuel and David will play a prominent part in your story.

3. "TO JONATHAN, THE FRIEND OF MY SOUL"

This is to be an imaginary letter from David to Jonathan. David writes it from Ziklag where he has found refuge from the pursuit of Saul. He gives his friend an account of what has happened to him since his flight. He tells him how he refused to injure Saul when the latter was at his mercy. Finally, he implores him not to believe that he has turned traitor because he

has taken refuge with the Philistines, explaining why he was compelled to do so. The letter should be full of warmth and tenderness and pathos, as from a man to his dearest friend, and as from one who is hounded and persecuted for no fault of his own.

D. SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

1. Read pp. 140-155 of "The Genius of Israel" by Carleton Noyes (Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston and New York, 1924) for a fine, brief sketch of the career of Saul and of the relations between him and David.

2. For a more extended account of the period read Chapters V and VI of the first volume of the "History of the Jews" by Heinrich Graetz (The Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1891).

3. The articles on Samuel and Saul in the Jewish Encyclopedia will help to fill out the portraits of these two figures.

CHRONOLOGIC CHART

All dates are B.C.E. Early dates are approximate.

CANAAN	EGYPT	MESOPOTAMIA *Babylonia*
	3400 King Menes (First Dynasty)	
	3000 **The Pyramid Age**	3000 **Sumer**
	2500 Relations with Canaan	2500 Sargon, the Akkadian
	2100 **The Feudal Age**	**"Sumer and Akkad"**
Abraham Isaac Jacob	2000 Relations with Canaan (Story of Sinuhi)	2050 Hammurabi **Babylonia**
	1700 Invasion of Hyksos ("Shepherd Kings")	
Continued	1580 Expulsion of Hyksos	Kassites
Arrival	**The New Empire**	and
of the	1460 Canaan Conquered by Thutmose III	other
Hebrews	1360 Amenhotep IV (Akhenaton) El-Amarna Letters	Invaders
Egyptian	1292–1225 Rameses II ("The Pharaoh of the Oppression")	**Assyria:**
Suzerainty	1225–1215 Merneptah ("The Pharaoh of the Exodus")	First Period
The Conquest under Joshua	1220 The Exodus	of Expansion
1200–1100 The Judges		
1100–1020 Samuel		
1080 Battle of Aphek		
1028–1013 King Saul		
1013 Battle of Gilboa		

INDEX

INDEX

1. Numbers printed in black-face type (thus, **121***) refer to pages where the subject is treated most fully.*
2. f. means "and the page following."
3. ff. means "and the pages following."

Aaron, 104, 121, **133**, 237, 253
Abiah, 284
Abiathar, 301
Abiezer 241
Abigail, 303
Abimelech, 243 ff., becomes king of Shechem, 243; his death, 244
Abiram, 175 (note 47)
Abishai, 301, 303
Abner, 293, 303
Abraham, name changed from Abram, 3; his journey from Haran to Canaan, 3 ff.; God's covenant with, 5; birthplace of 6; his discovery of the One God, 7; his iconoclasm, 8; traverses the "Fertile Crescent," 16; journeys into Egypt, 28; wars against "Kings of the East," 30; pleads for Sodom and Gomorrah, 30; his near-sacrifice of Isaac, 31; buys cave of Machpelah, 32; death of, 32; hospitality of, 35; 196
Abyssinia, 75 f.
Achish, 304 f.
Acre, Bay of, 191
Adam, 16, 47 (note)
Adoni-zedek, 205
Adullam, 301, 302 (ill.)
Ahimelech, 300
Ai, 184
Aijalon, 205
Akaba, Gulf of, 121, 145, 194
Akedah, the (near-sacrifice of Isaac), 31, 52
Akhenaton, see Amenhotep IV
Akkadians, 22 f.
Alphabet, see Writing
Amalekites, 122, 134, 239, 240 (ill.), 241, 258 (note 14), **294**, defeated by Saul, 294, 305 f.
Amenhotep IV, 91 ff.
Ammon, 147
Ammonites, 195 f., 235, 239, oppress the Israelites, 245; defeated by Jephthah, 245; 247, 285; defeated by Saul, 288; 295
Amon, 85, 91, 203
Amorites, 16, 23, 145, 147 (ill.), 181, **196**, defeated by Joshua, 205 f., 219
Amraphel, 30
Anakim (giants), 161 (note 15); 196
Aphek, battle of, 252; 305
Arabia, 6, 9, 12
Arabs, 6, 22, 31
Aram, 55 (note)
Arameans, 16
Ark of the Covenant, **134**, 209 f., 237, 252 f., 311
Armageddon, 91, 191
Arnon, river, 147, 188
Aryans, 119
Asahel, 301
Ashdod, 247
Asher, 33; tribe of, 206; 209, **233**, 241, territory of, 208 (map)
Ashera, 203 f., 230
Ashkelon, 99, 195, 247
Asia Minor, 12, 13
Assimilation, 230 f.
Assyria, 16, 28

Astarte, 25, **202** (ill.); 203, 331 (note 63)
Aswan, 75
Aton, 91, 93
Atonement, Day of, see Yom Kippur

B

Baal, **203** f., 230
Baala, see Ashera
Babel, the Tower of, 20
Babylon, 20, 23
Babylonia, 9, 11, 13, 16, 17 ff.; origin of name, 24; spread of its civilization, 25; religion of, 25; its influence on Hebrews, 26; conquered by Kassites, 27; 44; Creation myth of, 47; its influence on Canaan, 198
Balaam, 148 f., 163
Balak, 148
Barak, 239 f.
Bashan, 148
Beduins, 6, 35
Beer-sheba, 9, 28, 185, 209
Beisan, 331 (note 63)
Benjamin, 33, 34, 43; tribe of, 209, 231, **233** f., nearly destroyed, 236; 237, 239, 241, 245, 253, 287, territory of, 208 (map)
Beth-el, 28, 284
Beth-lehem, 268 (note 48), 295, 297 (ill.)
Beth-shan, 195, 207, 307, 331 (note 64)
Bezalel, 133
Bezer, 211
Bible, 171 (note), 212 (note)
Blood revenge, **39** f., 210
Boaz, see Ruth, Book of
Book of the Covenant, 107 (note)
"Book of the Dead," 87
Booths, Feast of, see Succoth
Brick making, in Egypt, 98 (ill.)
Burning Bush, the, **104**, 110

C

Cain, 47 (note)
Cairo, 75, 79
Caleb, 145, clan of, 207
Canaan, 3, 5, 11,; relations of, with Egypt, 86, 88 f., 92 f., 94, 99; conquered by Merneptah, 99; in period of the conquest (map), 182; geography of, **185** ff.; relief map of, 186; climate of, 191 f.; fertility of, 193; products of, 193, 199; the bridge between Egypt and Babylonia, 93 f.; 197; commerce of, 194 f.; inhabitants of, 195 ff.; under Babylonian influence, 198; under Egyptian influence, 198 f.; conquered by Hebrews, 205 ff.; divided among the Hebrew tribes, 207 ff.
Canaanites, 34, 196 f., occupations of, 201; cities of, 201, 214; political organization of, 201 f.; religion of, 202 f.; defeated by Joshua, 205; oppress the Israelites, 239 ff.; defeated by Barak, 240 f.
Caravan roads, 191, 194
Carmel, Mount, 190 (ill.), **191**, 252
Chaldeans, 28
Chefren, see Khafre
Cheops, see Khufu
Cherubim, 134 (ill.), 312 (note 15)
Children of Israel, origin of name, 33; see Hebrews
Chumash, 171 (note)
Circumcision, 5, 41, 319 (note 40)
Cities of refuge, 210 f.
Civil War among Hebrews, 235
Covenant, the Great, **5**; influence of, 5; 33, 121, 123, 221
Crete, 119
Cubit, 317 (note)
Cuneiform writing, 20 f.

D

Dagon, **251** (ill.), 252, 267 (note 45)
Damascus, 16, 194, 295
Dan, city of, 185, 209
Dan, 33, tribe of, 209, **234**, 237, 241, 248
Dathan, 175 (note 47)
David, **295** ff., anointed secretly by Samuel, 297; soothes Saul, 297; slays the giant Goliath, 298 f., 317; his friendship with Jonathan,

299, 322; a national hero, 299; a fugitive from Saul, 300 ff.; spares Saul, 303, 328; takes refuge with Philistines, 304; punishes the Amalekites, 306
Dead Sea, 188 f., 191, 207
Deborah, 239 ff.; song of, 240; 255
Decalogue, see Ten Commandments
Deity, see God
Delilah, 251, 265
Democracy, among nomads, 38 f.; of Hebrew kingship, 288 f.
Derah, 148
"Desert Generation," 117
Deuteronomy, Book of, 129, 142, 171 (and note)
Dietary laws, 135
Dinah, 34
Divination, 68 (note)
Division of Canaan among tribes, 207 ff.

E

Ebed-hepa, 92
Eben-ezer, 284
Eden, Garden of, 15 f., 47 (note)
Edom, 121, 145 ff., 207, 256
Edomites, 145 ff., 195 f., 295
Edrei, battle of, 148
Eglon (city), 205
Eglon (Moabite King), 239
Egypt, 9, 11, 42, 44; migration of Hebrews into, 45 f.; geography of, 75 ff.; civilization of, 78 ff.; security of, 78; Pyramid Age of, 79 ff.; writing of, 81 f.; art of, 81 f., 87; economic life of, 83; social structure of, 83; conscription of labor in, 83 f., 98; art of embalming in, 84; religion of, 85 f.; priests of, 85 f.; relations of, with Canaan, 86, 88 f., 92 f., 94, 99; Feudal Age of, 86; literature of, 87 ff.; conquered by Hyksos, 89 f.; New Empire Age of, 90 ff.; first world power, 91; Hebrews enslaved by, 98; plagues of, 105; its influence on Canaan, 198 f.
Egyptians (see also Egypt), dietary laws among, 67 (note); their beliefs concerning death, 84; their attitude toward Hebrews, 96; and Philistines, 119
Ehud, 238 f.
Ekron, 247
El-Amarna, 91, letters found at, 92 f., 202
Elders, demand a king, 285
Eleazar (priest), 207, 210
Eli, 253, 279, 311
Eliezer (Abraham's servant), 31, 54
Elim, 119, 121
Elkanah, 279
Embalming, 84
En-dor, 307
En-gedi, 303, 304 (ill.)
Enlil, 25
Ephraim, tribe of, 181, 209, 231, 233, 241 f., defeated by Jephthah, 246; 248, 253, 258 (note 14); territory of, 208 (map)
Ephrath, 268 (note 50)
Esau, 33, 43, 146
Esdraelon, see Jezreel
Eshcol, brook, 145
Euphrates, 3, 5, 15, 16, 164 (note 24)
Eve, 16, 47 (note)
Exodus, Book of, 107 (note); 129
Exodus, the Great, significance of, 102; 105

F

"Fertile Crescent," the, 12 ff.
Festivals, 135 f., 324 (note 50)
Flood, the Great, 19

G

Gad, 33; tribe of, 149, 181, 184, 235, 241, 245, territory of, 208 (map)
Galilee, Sea of, 187
Gath, 247
Gaza, 195, 206, 247, 250 (ill.), 251
Genesis, Book of, 47 (note)
Gerar, 28
Gerizim, Mount, 263 (note 35)
Gezer, 89, 99
Gibeah, 236, 253, 287, capital of Saul, 293

Gibeon, 205, battle of, 205; 207
Gibeonites, deceive the Israelites, 205, 217; persecuted by Saul, 295
Gideon, 241 ff., defeats the Midianites, 242; refuses the crown, 243; his strategem and victory, 260; 285
Gilboa, Mount, 191, 305, 307
Gilead, 44, 61 (note 21), 181, 245, 288
Gilgal, 217 (note 14), 283 f.
Gizeh, 79
Gleaning, 271 (note 56)
God, of Abraham, 7; Hebrew conceptions concerning, 26 f., 31
Gods and goddesses, see Idols
Goel, 272 (note 63)
Golan, 211
Golden calf, 131, 157
Goliath, 297 ff., 317
Gomorrah, 30
Goshen, 45, 46 (ill.), 75, 94, 96
Graven images, prohibition against, 125
Great Sea, see Mediterranean
Greeks, 119

H

Habiri, 92 f., 96
Hagar, 31
Ham, 47 (note)
Hammurabi, 24 ff.; as ruler, 24; Code of, 24 f., 196
Hannah, 279
Haran, 3, 8, 16, 31, 33
Hathor, see Isis
Hazor, 206
Hebrews, beginnings of, 5; origin of name, 5; religious ideas of, 26 f., 31; enter Canaan, 28; modify their nomad ways, 43; migrate into Egypt, 45 f.; their early lot in Egypt, 96; oppressed and enslaved in Egypt, 97 ff.; their attitude toward slavery, 99; their flight from Egypt, 105 f.; character of, 117 f; their journey to Canaan, 117 ff.; their complaints in the desert, 121, 143; defeat the Amalekites, 122; receive the Torah, 122 ff.; sin with the golden calf, 131; wander forty years in desert, 145; conquer Transjordania, 147 f.; conquer Canaan, 205 ff.; divide Canaan, 207 ff.; disunited, 229; exposed to idolatry and assimilation, 229 ff.; civil war among, 235; worship Baal, 237; oppressed by nations of Canaan, 238 ff.; defeat the Canaanites, 240 f.; defeat the Midianites, 242; oppressed by Philistines, 247; defeated by Philistines, 253; unifying forces among, 281; rallied by Samuel, 283 f.; defeat Philistines at Eben-ezer, 284; demand a king, 285; choose Saul as first king, 287; defeat the Philistines at Michmash, 291; defeated by Philistines at Gilboa, 307
Hebron, 32, 45, 183, 189, 195 f., 205, 211, 296
Hermon, Mount, 148 f., 187, 209, 210 (ill.)
Heshbon, 147, 196
Hieroglyphics, 82
"High places," 204, 230
High priest, 136 (ill.)
Hittites, 27, 93, 196, 201 (ill.)
Hivites, 217 (note 15)
"Holiness Code," 157 (note)
Hophni, 253
Horeb, see Sinai, Mount
Horus, 85
Huleh, 187
Hyksos, 89 f.

I

Ibri, 5
Idolatry, 134, 324 (note 49)
Idols, see Babylonia, religion of; Egypt, religion of; Idolatry; Dagon
Idol worship, see Idolatry;
Intermarriage, 222 (note 25), 230, 269 (note 51)
Isaac, 5, 28, 31; his great wealth, 32; stops among the Philistines, 34; death of, 43
Ishmael, 31

Ishtar, see Astarte
Isis, 84 f., 131 (ill.)
Israel, 33; see Jacob
Israelites, see Hebrews
Issachar, 33, tribe of, 206; 209, 233, 241, territory of, 208 (map)

J

Jabbok, river, 147, 188
Jabesh-gilead, 288, 307
Jabin, defeated by Joshua, 206
Jabin, oppressor of Israelites, 239
Jacob, 5, 28; his flight from Esau, 33; his wives, 33; called Israel, 33; his sons, 33; his return to Canaan, 34; prohibits idolatry, 42; old age of, 45; migrates into Egypt, 45; 234 f.
Jael, 240
Jahaz, battle of, 147
Japheth, 47 (note)
Jarmuth, 205
Jashar, Book of, 220 (note 23)
Jebusites, 209, 234
Jehovah, see Yahweh
Jephthah, 244 ff., defeats the Ammonites, 245; makes a rash vow, 245; defeats the Ephraimites, 246
Jericho, 183, its capture, 183; 184 (ill.); 194, 239.
Jerusalem, 92, 183, 194 (ill.); 195, 205, 206, 209
Jezreel, Valley of, 91, 183, 191, 192 (ill.); 200, 206, 247, 252
Joab, 301
Joel (son of Samuel), 284
Jonathan, 289 ff., his exploit at Michmash, 291; his "crime," 292 f.; his friendship with David, 299, 322; 302, his death, 307
Joppa, 119
Jordan River, 181, 187 (and ill.); 188 (ill.); fords of, 246 (ill.)
Jordan Valley, 185 ff.
Joseph, 34; sold into Egypt, 44; rises to power, 45; and his brothers, 45, 59; tribe of, 183
Joshua, 122, 145, 181 ff., succeeds Moses, 183; captures Jericho and Ai, 183 f.; defeats the Amorites and Canaanites, 205 ff.; divides Canaan among the Hebrew tribes, 207 ff.; death of, 211
Joshua, Book of, 207, 212 (note)
Jotham, 243 f., his fable, 243
Jubilee year, 141, 157
Judah, 33, tribe of, 207, 234 f., 241, 245, 247, 281, 284, 296, territory of, 208 (map)
Judea, 181
Judges, 231 ff., 248
Judges, Book of, 231, 235, 238, 248, 255 (note)
Justice, in the Torah, 139 f.

K

Kadesh-barnea, 121, 144 f.
Karnak, 87, temple of, 87; 91, 94
Kassites, 27
Kedesh, 211
Keilah, 301 f.
Khafra, 80
Khufu, 80
Kinnereth, Lake, see Galilee, Sea of
Kishon, river, 191, 239, 258 (note 19), 259 (note 21)
Korah, rebellion of, 144
Kree-ah, 68 (note)

L

Laban, 33, 56 (note)
Lachish, 205
Laish, see Dan, city of
Lake Victoria, 75
Language, 230
Laws, "between man and God," 132 ff.; "between man and his neighbor," 137 ff.
Leah, 33, 43
Lebanon, 83
Lebanon Mts., 16, 190
Leshem, see Dan, city of
Levi, 33; tribe of, 42, 133, 210, 237
Levirate marriage, 269 (note 52)
Levites, see Levi, tribe of
Leviticus, Book of, 129, 133 f., 157 (note)
Lot, 8, 28 f., 147, wife of, 188 f.
Luxor, 87, 91, 94
Lybia, desert of, 79

M

Machir, 258 (note 15)
Machpelah, cave of, 32, 43, 196
Manasseh, tribe of, 149, 181 f., 184, 207, 209, 233, 235, 241 f., 253, territory of, 208 (map)
Maneh (weight), 22
Manna, 121 f.
Marah, 119, 121
Marduk, 25, 48 f.
Matzoh, 136
Mediterranean Sea, 75
Megiddo, 91, 207, 258 (note 19)
Memphis, 80, 86
Menes, 79
Merneptah, 99 f., 104
Merom, Lake, 206; battle of, 206
Meroz, 259 (note 23)
Mesopotamia, 3, 5, origin of name, 55 (note)
Mezuzah, 176 (note 51)
Micah, 255 (note)
Michal, 299 f.
Michmash, 291, 292 (ill.)
Midian, 61 (note), 103
Midianites, 240 (ill.), 241 f., defeated by the Israelites, 242
Mizpah, 282 (ill.), 284
Moab, 147, 188, 268 (note 49)
Moabites, 195 f., 235, oppress the Israelites, 238 f.; 295
Monotheism, 7
Montefiore, Moses, 42, 44
Moriah, 52 (note)
Moses, 101 ff., origin of name, 100 (note 4); personality of, 102; birth and upbringing of, 103; his flight to Midian, 103; his vision of the burning bush, 104; his mission, 104; his passion for justice, 107; his difficult task, 117 f.; teaches the Hebrews the Torah, 129 ff.; organizes the people, 143, 160 (note); leads them forty years, 145; conquers Transjordania, 147 f.; his death, 149, 176; 233, 279
Moses, Books of, 129
Mummies, 84

N

Nabi (see also Prophets), 283
Nablus, see Shechem
Nahash, 288
Nahor, 55 (note)
Naomi, see Ruth, Book of
Naphtali, 33, tribe of, 206; 209, 233, 239, 242, territory of, 208 (map)
Nazirite, 249, 256 (note 1)
Nebiim, see Prophets
Nebo, Mount, 148 (ill.), 149
Negeb, 121, 183, 189, 207
New moon, festival of, 324 (note 50)
Nile delta, 75 f., 94
Nile River, 9, 75
Nile Valley, 75 ff.
Noah, 19, 22, 47 (note)
Nob, 300
Nomads, 5 ff.; their attitude toward cities, 9 f.; life of, 35 ff.; livelihood of, 35 ff.; social structure of, 37 f.; character of, 38 f.; blood revenge among, 39 f.; hospitality among, 39; religion of, 40 f.; 231, 280
Nomadic life, see Nomads
Nubia, 78, 91, 94
Numbers, Book of, 160 (note)

O

Og, 148
Oholiab, 133
Osiris, 85, 87, 203

P

Palestine, see Canaan; origin of name, 248
Papyrus, 82
Paran, Desert of, 121, 143
Passover, 136
Patriarchs, the Hebrew, see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
Peninah, 309 (note 5)
Pentateuch, 171 (note)
Persian Gulf, 6, 9, 12, 13
Petra, 146 (ill.)
Pharaoh, the, 63 (note); origin of word, 84; of the oppression, 97 ff.; of the Exodus, 104

Philistines, 118 (ill.), 119, 197, 207, 234, 247 ff.; oppress the Israelites, 247; discomfited by Samson, 250 ff.; defeat the Israelites at Aphek, 253; defeated by Israelites at Eben-ezer, 284; defeated by Saul, 291; 295, defeat the Israelites at Mount Gilboa, 307
Phineas (priest), 210
Phinehas (son of Eli), 253
Phoenicia, 191
Phoenicians, 22, 199 (ill.); 200, 207, 233, 285
Phylacteries, 176 (note 50)
"Pilgrimage Festivals," 135 f.
Pithom, 94, 105 (ill.)
Priests, Egyptian, 85 f.; Canaanite, 204; Levites as, 210
Promised Land, see Canaan
Prophets, 283 f., "Saul, too, among the," 287
"Prophets" (division of Bible), 212 (note)
Purity, sexual, 135; personal, 135, 326 (note 56)
Pyramid, the Great, 80 f.; cross section of, 81
Pyramids, 79 ff.

R

Raamses, 94
Rachel, 33, 34, 42; tomb of, 42, 44; death of, 43
Rahab, 214
Ramah, 279, 280 (ill.), 284
Rameses II, 93 f., oppresses the Hebrews, 97 f.
Ramman, 201 (ill.), 202
Ramoth-gilead, 211
Re (pron. *ray*), 85
Rebekah, 31, 33, 54
Red Sea, 12, 75, crossing of, 106
Religion, Sumerian, 19; Babylonian, 25; of the nomad, 40 f.; Egyptian, 85 f.; Canaanite, 202 f.; of the Hebrews, 7, 26 f., 31
Rephidim, 122
Reuben, 33; tribe of, 149, 181, 184, 235, 241, 245, territory of, 208 (map)
Rosh Hashanah, 137
Ruth, Book of, 268 ff.

S

Sabbath, the, 26 f., 125 ff., compared with Babylonian *Shabattum*, 126 f.; 135
Sabbatical year, 141, 157
Sacrifice, 133, 309 (note 3)
Sacrifice, human, 31, 40, 134, 198 (ill.), 204, 246
Salt, Valley of, 188
Samaria, 209, 234 (ill.)
Samson, 248 ff., his character, 248; source of his strength, 249; his exploits, 250 f.; his betrayal, 251; his death, 252, 265
Samuel, 39, 279 ff., birth and early life of, 279, 308; his labors, 283 f.; his assistants, the *nebiim*, 283; his judgeship, 284; warns against a king, 285 f.; anoints Saul, 287; renounces Saul, 294; anoints David, 297; his death, 301; his spirit raised by Saul, 307
Samuel, Book of, 308 (note)
Sarah, 7, 30; death of, 31
Sargon, 22
Saul, 287 ff., his appearance, 287; his anointment, 314; chosen king, 287; defeats the Ammonites, 288; defeats the Philistines, 291; organizes his kingdom, 293; defeats the Amalekites, 294; renounced by Samuel, 294; his malady, 295; soothed by David, 297; seeks to slay David, 300; pursues David, 301 f.; spared by David, 303, 328; raises the ghost of Samuel, 307; defeated by Philistines, 307; his death, 307
Seir, Mount, 256
Semites, 5, 22 f., 47 (note), 90
Senwosri, see Sesostris
Sesostris, 89
Seth, 47 (note)
Seti I, 93
Shabattum, 26 f., compared with Hebrew Sabbath, 126 f.
Shabuoth, 136
Shamash, 202

Sharon, Plain of, 190, 252, 311 (note 13)
Shechem, 28; spoiled by Simeon and Levi, 34; 42, 45, 183, 195, 211, 243 f., 263 (notes)
Shem, 47 (note)
Sheol, 26
Shibboleth, 246
Shiloh, 209 f., 236 (ill.), 237, 253, 279
Shinar, Plain of, 13 ff., 14 (ill.), 30, 79
Shofetim, see Judges, Book of
Shunem, 305
Shur, Desert of, 28, 121, 144
Sidon, 206
Sihon, 147
Simeon, 33; tribe of, 42, 209, 234 f., 241, 281, territory of, 208 (map)
Sin, 202
Sinai, Mount, 120, giving of Torah at, 122, 151; 124 (ill.), 130 (ill.)
Sinai Peninsula, 13, 16, 79, 83, 119, 121, 138 (ill.), 140 (ill.)
Sinuhi, story of, 88 f.
Sisera, 239, 260 (note 25)
Slavery, laws concerning, 139 ff.
Social justice, 139 f.
Sodom, 30
Song of Deborah, 240; text, 255
Sphinx, the Great, 80
Succoth, 105, 136
Sudan, 75
Suez, Gulf of, 121
Suez, Isthmus of, 78
Sumer, 18 (see also Sumerians)
"Sumer and Akkad," 23, 196
Sumerians, 17; civilization of, 17 ff.; religion of, 19; writing of, 20; calendar of, 22; conquered by Akkadians, 22
Syria, 3, 23, 91 f., 190

T

Taanach, 207
Tabernacle, 133 f.
Tabernacles, Feast of, see Succoth
Tabor, Mount, 191, 238 (ill.), 240
Tanis, 94
Temples, see Tower temples, Karnak, Luxor
Ten Commandments, 123 ff., 134, 136, proclamation of, 151; text of, 153 f.
Tephillin, 176 (note 50)
Terah, 7
Teraphim, 41, 324 (note 40)
Thebes, 85 f., 91, 94
Thutmose III, 91, 199 f.
Thutmose IV, 91
Tiamat, 48 f.
Tiberias, Lake, see Galilee, Sea of
Tigris, 13, 16
Torah, 129 ff., 142
Tower temples, Sumerian, 18 f.
Transjordania (see also Gilead), conquest of, 147 f.; topography of, 185; 194, 247
Tutenkhamon, 92
Twelve Spies, the, 145, 160, 183, 196, 201

U

Ur, 6, 17, 23

W

Wanderings of Hebrews in the desert, 145
Weeks, Feast of, see Shabuoth
Writing, Sumerian, 20; Egyptian, 81 f.

Y

Yahweh, 111 (note 13)
Yarmuk, river, 188
Yom Kippur, 137

Z

Zebulun, 33, tribe of, 206; 209, 233, 239, 242, territory of, 208 (map)
Ziklag, 305
Zin, Desert of, 121, 145
Zipporah, 103
Zobah, 295

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